

Disability NOW

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Give us Viagra

Disability groups want the Government to make the impotence drug Viagra available to disabled people, after a temporary ban on its supply by the NHS.

Health Secretary Frank Dobson has said the drug, which is now licensed in the UK and can be bought privately, cannot be prescribed on the NHS until the Government makes a further announcement in a few weeks.

The Government claims the drug could cost the NHS between £50 and £150 million a year, whereas impotence treatments now cost £12 million.

This could put other services at risk, it said. But the drug's producer Pfizer says it would cost the same as current treatments.

Impotence can occur in men who have diabetes, multiple sclerosis (ms), or have a spinal injury. In trials the drug helped 59 per cent of diabetic men and 83 per cent with spinal injuries.

Neil, 48, from Durham, who has diabetes, is involved in the

trials. "You go into the depths of despair," he said. "With Viagra everything just took its course. You start living again."

Morgan Williams, director of SPOD, the disability and sexuality charity, is worried that the drug may be restricted.

"Our concern is whether there will be prioritising," he said, "and, as often happens, disabled men will be low priority."

A spokesman for the Multiple Sclerosis Society said: "We believe that people with ms who have this problem should qualify for an available and licensed therapy, if their doctor believes it can help them."

The British Diabetic Association is still consulting on the drug. But in a statement it said: "Any treatment which is shown to benefit those with a clearly diagnosed medical need for treatment should be available on the NHS."



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Preacher needs to practise

Disabled people are poorly represented even among the staff in Britain's largest disability charities, a DN survey has found (see page 16).

Mencap employs 4,500 people, but only 1.4 per cent are disabled, while about three per cent of Scope's 4,000 staff are disabled. The Royal National Institute for the Blind has 2,700 employees - seven per cent of whom are disabled. Some smaller disability groups fare better. One in eight of the UK population is disabled.

Rachel Hurst, chair of the campaigning group Rights Now!, said charities should try to reach 75 per cent.

"They do not practise what they preach," she said. "If you can do it in small organisations you can in big ones."



No bias here: Bob Mustard on his way to winning the blind section of the Royal Mail Scottish Lawn Bowls Championship in Aberdeen last month. The event, which attracted 150 competitors in nine categories, is part of the Royal Mail's Willing and Able Scheme.

The Royal Mail intends to invest a further £25,000 this year alone to speed up the development of sports facilities for disabled people in Scotland. (For more sport, see page 10.)

Pooling aid 'too costly'

Government plans to bridge the gap between health and social care by pooling budgets could well lead to increased charges for services, disability groups are claiming.

Health Ministers Paul Boateng and Alan Milburn announced the proposals last month in the document *Partnership in Action (New Opportunities for Joint Working between Health and Social Services)**.

If the plans go ahead, health authorities and social services will be able to provide a "one-stop shop" service on health and social care.

Money will be placed in a single budget so that agencies can commission and provide services and take decisions on care packages together.

The idea is that service users should then receive a unified package of care.

The Government hopes the plans will see an end to health authorities and social services continually fighting over who pays for what services.

Alan Milburn said: "Many vulnerable people have taken

second place to a system plagued by barriers and turf wars. This approach will end wasteful duplication."

However Judi Clements, chief executive of the mental health charity Mind, was initially sceptical about the scheme.

"More money is still needed and pooling budgets is not enough to make the system work if the resources are not sufficient," she said.

Mind is also concerned about whether health services will remain free once budgets are pooled. It says charges for services such as day centres would mean people with mental health problems don't take them up.

Mencap is also worried about backdoor charges.

Richard Kramer, head of campaigns, said: "This could lead to a better use of resources and ensure that support for learning disabilities is not squeezed, but it may lead to an increase in charges for existing services or new charges for services that previously were free."

*Free, tel: 0541-555 455.

Pad provision in focus

Campaigners have welcomed the promise of a new policy on incontinence services next spring, although they say it may be too late to stave off further cuts.

Health Minister Paul Boateng has invited the NHS Executive to head a working party with representatives from professional and voluntary groups, which will look at updating 1991 guidance on provision.

"I want to ensure the NHS provides a modern service that lets people have access to high quality, readily available assistance," said Mr Boateng.

Although the Minister did not mention the issue of VAT being



Boateng: modernisation needed

charged on continence products – something which has caused severe problems in parts of the country (DN, June) – David Pollock, director of the Continence Foundation, said

he welcomed the "open way" in which the review would be carried out.

"We are not campaigning for a reversal of the imposition of VAT," he said, "but for compensation for the cost of it, which is about £9 million. We think the review is likely to suggest a lot more than that."

He did concede there would be some wait. His group had pressed for interim guidelines for health authorities for the next financial year, when there may be more cuts because of the imposition of VAT.

This was refused, but he said his group would watch for any cuts and fight them vigorously.

Aid probe under attack

A disability organisation in Glasgow is trying to make a legal challenge to the Benefits Integrity Project (BIP), which reassesses disabled people's entitlement to benefits.

The BIP is looking into people's entitlement to Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

The Centre for Independent Living in Glasgow (CILIG) has taken up a case on behalf of a client who has lost his care component for DLA as a result of the BIP.

CILIG was waiting to see whether legal aid is available as DN went to press.

It is questioning whether BIP's investigative powers are being

used appropriately. Grant Carson, one of CILIG's coordinators, said: "It is arguable that BIP's powers are discretionary and that a blanket policy of over 400,000 investigations, with limited blanket exemptions, is an invalid use of a discretionary power."

But a spokeswoman for the Department of Social Security denied such claims.

"The forms are not an investigation," she said. "We are not carrying out blanket reviews. It is an evidence gathering exercise, and on a case by case basis if there is evidence to suggest there has been a change in circumstances then that would be

passed on to an adjudication officer. It is important to understand that claims do not automatically get down-graded because they go to an officer. They can go up."

The challenge comes after a woman with multiple sclerosis in Scotland was told she would not be exempt from the BIP even though she can only communicate by raising an eye when the correct letter of the alphabet is spoken to her.

Monica Elder-Woodward, 45, and her husband James, 50, both get higher rate DLA.

Mr Elder-Woodward said: "Filling in the form would take about one whole day for her."

Fury over threshold

Disability campaigners have attacked what they see as the watering down of promised extensions to anti-discrimination employment laws.

From 1 December firms with 15 people or more will have to abide by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). Currently any firm employing less than 20 people is exempt.

Minister for Disabled People, Margaret Hodge, said 45,000 more firms would now be covered. But disability groups such as Sense had believed the threshold would be reduced to companies with two employees.

Lord Ashley, who led an MP's protest over the reduction, said it was "grossly inadequate".

David Grayson, chairperson of the National Disability Council, who attended the first of Mrs Hodge's national consultations on the proposed Disability Rights Commission, said campaigners may only have themselves to blame.

"Consultations with businesses have thrown up concerns," he said. "We have to get better at showing these changes will not involve huge costs."

Meanwhile the Government was strenuously denying



Lorna Reith: recalling promises

reports in the media that it now plans to put off disability benefit reforms for at least a year.

This marks a change from last month, when rumours suggested Incapacity Benefit (IB) was about to go. A Department of Social Security spokeswoman would only say no decision had been made about IB's future.

But the Disability Benefits Consortium (DBC) has written to Social Security Minister Alastair Darling about the matter. DBC member Lorna Reith said: "If the Government will make an announcement in the Queen's Speech next month they have not got much time to consult with us, which they promised to do."

Hodge interview, page 13.

In brief

Users can help

User groups can help local health, social and voluntary sector services improve their provisions for visually and hearing impaired people, a report* has found.

The groups can take an active part in service planning and in the consultation process, Living Options (Devon) says. The report is based on the experiences of a user group in Devon, which thinks other projects should be set up elsewhere in the country.

*Free, tel: (01392) 203450

Welsh deaf kids win

A lottery award of £180,246 has enabled the National Deaf Children's Society to set up a Welsh Office. The award will let the charity expand its information, advice and advocacy services into the principality, and there are also plans to use the money to set up a network of self-help groups.

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Diabetes hope

Better management of diabetes with strong drugs to control blood pressure and blood-glucose could significantly reduce the risk of diabetics developing fatal conditions, research studies have revealed.

Three 20-year studies by the UK Prospective Diabetes Study Group (UPDSG) at Oxford University looked at the effects of blood pressure medication as well as drugs which control blood sugar in over 5,000 people with adult-onset diabetes. This is the most common form of the condition.

Apart from the benefits to human health, the research has also shown that better management could save the NHS

between £260 and £720 for every year of a patient's life.

The blood pressure study published in the *British Medical Journal* found that people whose blood pressure was tightly controlled by enzyme inhibitor drugs and beta-blockers were less likely to develop conditions such as heart disease or strokes than those whose blood pressure was less tightly controlled.

Those on tight controls were 56 per cent less likely to have a heart attack and 44 per cent less likely to have a stroke.

The other studies published in the *Lancet* revealed that improved blood glucose control to keep blood sugar at normal

levels reduces the progression of conditions such as blindness, kidney failure and amputations which diabetes can cause. It may also reduce the risk of heart attacks.

Professor Robert Turner, who led the research, said: "It is worthwhile putting more money into intensive care of adult-onset diabetes because often these patients are only seen once or twice a year.

"Now it is apparent they need extra attention to make sure their blood pressure is near normal and their blood glucose level is more normal. The additional costs of treatment now would be recouped by fewer hospital admissions later on."



JACK HICKES PHOTOGRAPHERS

Now tell Sid what its like: staff from two British Gas Home Energy shops in Leeds experiencing what life could be like for an elderly or disabled customer as part of their disability awareness training. The staff were fitted with opaque or blacked-out goggles and ankle weights for their stroll through the streets of the city.

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Helen Tilbury: denied therapy

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Polly Toynbee, *Guardian* columnist, will give the keynote address *Welfare Reform – the Equality Debate*.

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Hoteliers in Ulster fail tests

Hoteliers in Northern Ireland are ignoring the needs of deaf people, a new report by the Royal National Institute for Deaf People is claiming.

The report, *Breaking the Silence*, surveyed 59 hotels in Northern Ireland. Less than a quarter had flashing or vibrating alarm systems for guests. Many had badly placed signs and few staff could communicate with people with hearing difficulties. Only two out of 1,814 employees were trained in basic sign language.

Brian Symington, director of the RNID Northern Ireland, said: "Hotels and restaurants have to realise is that deaf and hard of hearing people have considerable spending power. It is in the interests of the hotels to do something."

Lone traveller faints on train

A diabetic woman passed out on a train because she had to travel in the guard's van where her carer could not watch her.

Anne Clark, 59, from Cwmbran, was travelling from Eastbourne to London in August when she fainted. "Luckily my carer did come in



Angry: Mrs Clark with friends

and she helped me to get my insulin," she said.

Wheelchair user Mrs Clark was in the guard's van because Eastbourne trains have no wheelchair spaces and have slam doors.

Connex South Central said it had no plans to change rolling stock. "If our franchise had been extended we would have replaced all slam-door trains in five years," a spokesman said.

The Health and Safety Executive is considering having such trains banned by 2003.

But Mrs Clark thinks that will be too late. "Having to pay for the carer's seat and your own while the carer has to sit somewhere else is not on," she said.

Stammer blows

BT has sponsored an advertising campaign to encourage the parents of children who stammer to go for treatment.

The campaign follows a four-year research project funded by the company and the British Stammering Association (BSA). The project, targeted at GPs, aimed to encourage them to refer any child under five with a stammer to a speech therapist.

Now BT and BSA have turned their attention to parents through a series of advertisements. These feature a chronic stammerer, David Preece, talking about his experiences. "I couldn't answer the door," he says. "I couldn't answer the phone. I couldn't even tell my wife how wretched I felt."

A spokesman for BSA said: "A lot of adult stammerers have a



Early treatment for stammering children is the key, the BSA believes

fear of using the phone because the focus is on the voice."

The BSA believes early treatment of children who stammer could see the end of the disability in future years. "Many parents are told that their child

will grow out of stammering," the spokesman said. "Most will out-grow it naturally but a tiny percentage won't. It is important that all receive help to catch the ones who will go on to become chronic stammers."

'Wee souls' we aren't

"Poor wee soul" is the sort of language that disability charity Capability Scotland wants to see wiped off every Scot's lips.

Its new leaflet, *Plain Talking**, launched last month, aims to highlight patronising language.

It is the result of a survey of 200 disabled Scots by the charity. Half of them had been told they were a fire hazard or had been described as victims.

But 85 per cent felt attitudes have improved this decade. They include Paul Heneachon

from South Ayrshire, although he has reservations.

"There is still some terminology that should be changed," he said. "My GP said I was a

spastic diaplegic. I didn't want that term used as my boss would get the wrong idea."

*Free on tel: 0131-313 5510.



Scottish football coach Craig Brown reads the leaflet with respondents

Benefits agency is so sorry

The Benefits Agency (BA) has admitted it was wrong to stop a Newcastle man's disability benefits for 18 weeks.

Chris Marshall, 42, had his income support cut in April for three months. He says requests for emergency payments were ignored. In July his benefit was restored but in August it was stopped again for five weeks.

Mr Marshall, who has arthritis, said he thought his campaigning work with the charity Incapacity Action had influenced the way he was treated by BA staff.

He has now received a letter from Peter Mathison, chief executive of BA. It said: "From an initial examination of the case, it is clear you have not received the standard of service you have a right to expect."

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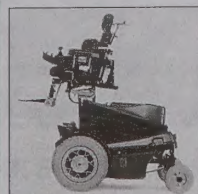
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Long wait for chairs

A special seating service has admitted that cash shortages mean it cannot meet demand for assessments, after a disabled woman had to wait in bed for one for six months.

Anne Andresen, 42, from Hertfordshire, who has multiple sclerosis and angina, asked for help in May after her condition deteriorated.

Stevenage's Lister Hospital said she would have to wait for an assessment at the Special Seating Service at Stanmore, in north London, which could take nine months.

Mrs Andresen has now got a chair on loan from a charity



Andresen: six months in bed

but had to spend six months in bed before getting it. She has still not received an appointment for Stanmore.

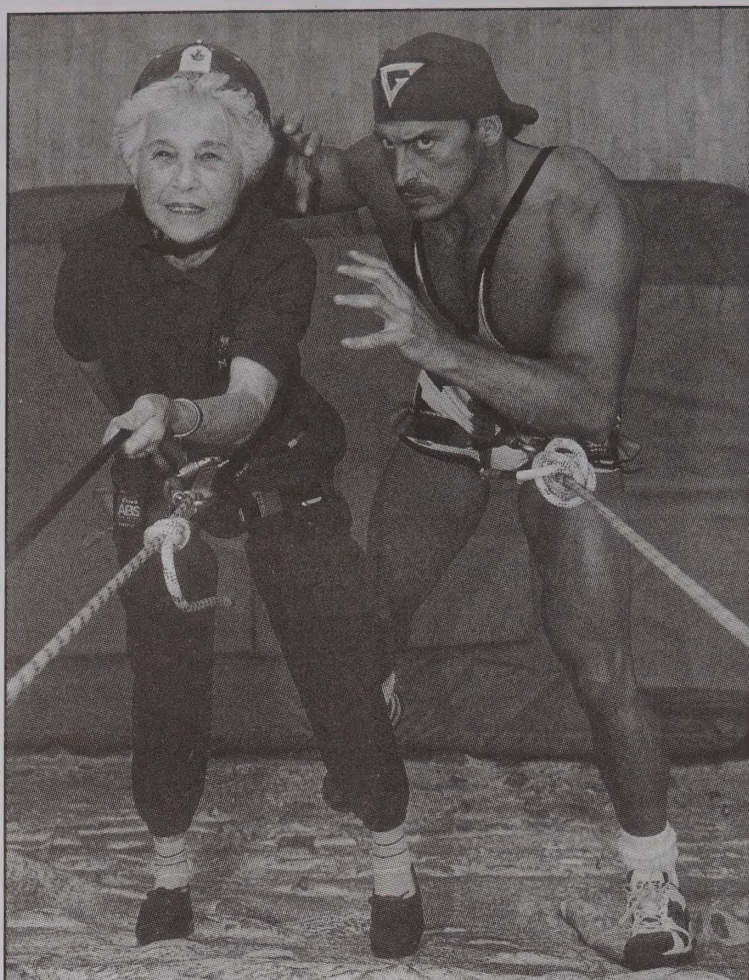
"I believe the NHS has failed me," she said. "I have been left in bed simply because they would not or could not provide me with the chair I needed."

Pat Salt, manager of the Stanmore service, believed the referral was only received in July. She said: "She will probably get her assessment in ten weeks and may not wait eight to nine months, but that is the average waiting time for a full assessment. The problem is that we get more referrals than we can realistically deal with."

Sam Gallop, chair of the steering group for emPOWER, which campaigns on wheelchairs, said: "Sadly this is probably not an isolated incident. We need a Disablement Services Authority to coordinate services."

The Group called for such an authority in September in its response to the Government green paper on the NHS.

The Government itself launched a review aimed at improving wheelchair services earlier this year.



Age has its sling: TV Gladiator Wolf trains 84-year-old great-grandmother Nan Leworthy for her third sponsored abseil. Mrs Leworthy will be scaling the walls of Watford's Harlequin shopping centre next month. All the money she raises for disability charities will be matched by a donation from the Camelot Foundation.

Not a g'day for the Aussie gay

Disability organisations in Australia are refusing to publicise the work of a gay disabled people's organisation.

Access Plus, a group of gay, lesbian and bisexual disabled people, wants to hold the first ever seminar on those issues in Australia. But it claims that one third of the disability groups it contacted refused to publicise the conference.

Their reasons included not wanting to offend Catholics,

not having any gay clients, and having parents on their boards.

Frank Hall-Bentick, of Disabled People's International in Australia, said: "Some of our organisations have fought to include women and men who are gay and lesbian, but a lot are conservative."

The news comes weeks after the Australian Government admitted sterilising over 200 girls with learning difficulties unlawfully earlier this decade.

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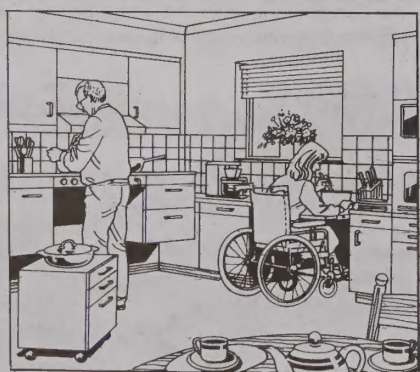
We are seeking to interview disabled people who have used cannabis therapeutically. If you are interested in participating then please contact Craig Morris on 0181 331 7633.

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In brief

Looking for a leader

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On track for loo guide

Railtrack is sponsoring the first edition of the accessible toilet guide, *Is there an Accessible Loo? Atlas Guide* in the year 2000. The company has donated £20,000 towards computer equipment and pre-publication expenses. Volunteers are still needed to check out loos in Durham and the North East, East Anglia and the West Country before the December deadline. Tel: 0181-904 8321.

Access to eye care

Forty per cent of people with learning difficulties have eye problems yet many do not have eye tests, new research by the Royal National Institute for the Blind has claimed. The charity has launched a campaign to ensure they are not overlooked. It is compiling a directory of optometrists willing to test the sight of people with learning difficulties which will be published next month and it has put together a training pack for staff. Tel: 0345-669 999.

In a flap over smoking

The Winged Fellowship Trust charity has banned smoking from its respite care and holiday centres over the next two months so that guests with asthma and breathing difficulties can enjoy a smoke-free stay. Tel: 0171-833 2594.

Equipped for style

A new exhibition of trendy equipment designed by and for disabled people is being organised by the City Gallery in Leicester from next month. Disabled and non-disabled people will be able to put forward their ideas for glamorous and useful aids for the show *Adorn. Equip and Accessorise*. There will be an open meeting to discuss plans on 30 October. For information tel: 0116-254 0595.

Inclusive fitness

Disabled and non-disabled people can train together in a new set of fitness classes organised through the spinal injury charity *Aspire* and the charity for young stroke victims *Different Strokes*. The classes will run at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in London from 11am to noon on Saturdays. Tel: 0181-420 6715.

Absent assessors

None of 25 newly appointed officials who will decide whether disabled children are getting the right education are themselves disabled, the Government has admitted.

The officials were appointed as lay members of the Special Educational Needs Tribunal (SENT) which hears appeals from parents against councils.

The Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) received 343 applications for the new posts, 55 of

which were from disabled people. But only three of the 60 people interviewed had disabilities, and none of these three were appointed.

This means there are now 102 lay members in England and eight in Wales. Of these four are disabled.

Katy Simmons of the Independent Panel for Special Education Advice said: "The SENT has been a great force for good and given access to justice for many children with

disabilities. It is disappointing that it has not been strengthened further by the experience of more disabled people."

Micheline Mason, coordinator of the Alliance for Inclusive Education, said: "It is awful. They do not understand the value of personal experience."

A DfEE spokesman said: "We were keen to get more disabled lay members and advertised in the disability press. We hope to recruit more disabled people later, but we recruit on merit."

Carers still go ignored

More than 70 per cent of carers provide care for more than 15 hours a day, but their needs are ignored by hospitals when they discharge a disabled person, a survey found last month.

The survey of 1,346 full-time unpaid carers found 71 per cent were not asked if they thought they could cope when someone was discharged.

The survey*, by the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, (PRTC) also found that 94 per cent of carers are providing medical assistance such as physiothera-

py, but only a third had been trained to carry this out.

David Butler, chief executive of the PRTC, said: "If they do



Butler: carers are at crisis point

not get support, carers who look after somebody day and night can reach crisis point."

Monica Clarke, 52, of London, cares for her husband John, 61, and needs to supervise him for 15 hours a day while he is connected to a feeding pump. "The doctors never addressed the effect it would have on our lives," she said.

The Government is reviewing the needs of carers and will publish results in January.

*Free from, tel: 0171-480 7788.

Good job, no house

A disabled man is being prevented from taking up a new job because it is in a different city where he is struggling to find accessible housing and transfer his community care.

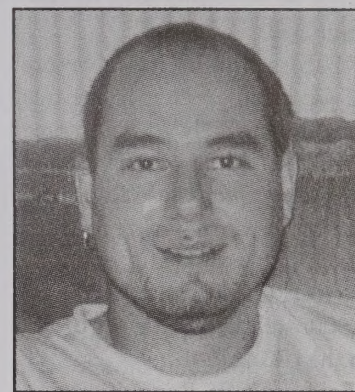
He has already lost one job because of this.

David Colley was offered a job three months ago as a manager in a scheme helping newly disabled adults in Liverpool.

Mr Colley, 34, of Newcastle, who currently works at Disability Action North East, said: "Previous to this I had been offered a job in Manchester but they could not hold it open while I sorted out accommodation and the transfer of community care. I am now facing the same issues."

A Liverpool City Council spokeswoman confirmed there was a shortage of accessible housing in the city.

Jill Stewart, research and public policy manager at Scope,



Colley: no luck finding a home

said it was a common problem. "The only way disabled people can move around the country is by using social housing," she said. "We need more of it which is accessible. You should also be able to get the same support wherever you live and it should go with you."

Scope will highlight the issue in a report in December and a conference on 28 January.

Scope, tel: 0171-619 7100.

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BRITISH MADE

Poor mums risk

Women from poorer backgrounds are twice as likely as others to give birth prematurely, a survey has found.

Teenagers, women who left school at 16, and those who are single or live alone each run the same risk.

"Babies who are born before 32 weeks of pregnancy are one third more likely to have some sort of disability," added Professor Gian Carlo Di Renzo of the University of Perugia in Italy, who carried out the EUROPOP survey. "At least 3,000 are born with problems in the UK each year."

Professor Di Renzo's survey looked at 16,000 women who

gave birth between 1995 and 1997 in 17 European countries. Pregnancy normally lasts 40 weeks. A baby born before 32 weeks is considered to be severely premature.

But the survey does confirm that women who have already had pre-term births still carry the highest risk. They are five times more likely to have a very pre-term birth.

The survey also found that women who smoke more than ten cigarettes a day almost double the risk of having babies before they reach the 32nd week of pregnancy.

Those working more than 40 hours per week or who are in a

stressful job also run a much higher risk.

Lucilla Poston, professor of foetal health for the charity Tommy's Campaign, said: "The UK has one of the highest risks of premature births and teenage pregnancies in Europe and one in five babies is born to single women. Although we know that previous problems in pregnancy are still the greatest risk, this confirms that social factors are still a serious contributor to early labour."

The UK was the only one of the countries surveyed that has no statutory special leave for women with health problems connected with pregnancy.

Net speeds diagnoses



Valerie Roy: can see the benefit

Doctors in Manchester are using the internet to give help to people with arthritis. Rheumatologists at Withington Hospital have created an electronic mail service to be used by GPs to help diagnoses.

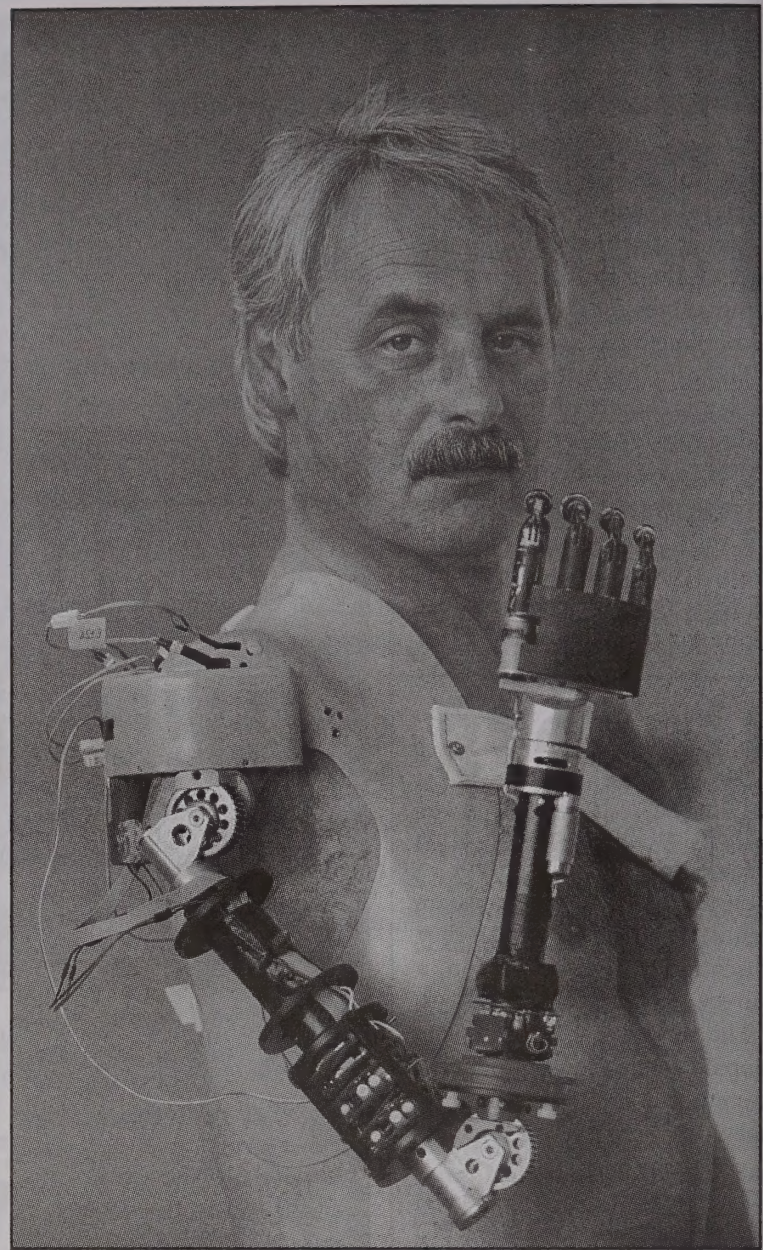
The service includes a questionnaire which was tested by two junior doctors with no rheumatological experience. They interviewed patients using the questionnaire and made provisional diagnoses. Eighty-six per cent of these were later confirmed by a rheumatologist.

Explaining this success rate, Dr Badal Pal, a rheumatologist

who helped set up the "cyber-clinic", said: "Seventy five per cent of rheumatology diagnosis is asking the right questions."

Valerie Roy from Dorset has severe rheumatoid arthritis. She felt people in her area would benefit. "There is one rheumatologist for the whole area and he cannot possibly give you the time," she said.

But an Arthritis Care spokesman said the service would not make up for a lack of rheumatologists in areas just like Dorset, which the charity highlighted in a recent survey (DN, September).



CLARE ARRON

Two's better than one: So says Scottish hotelier Campbell Aird who has now been fitted with the world's first fully mobile bionic arm (DN, August). A team of experts from the Princess Margaret Rose Hospital in Edinburgh have been working on the carbon fibre arm for 12 years. "There have been one or two teething problems," Mr Aird told DN. "But since having it fitted I have been able to change a lightbulb, hang up pictures and tie my own shoelaces."

He thought it was sad that Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar, who had met him and been impressed with the arm, had not promised extra money for future projects like this.

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Each bungalow unit has a sensory courtyard garden at its centre and there is a spacious activity centre with multi sensory room and spa pool on the site.

The units have been built to a very high specification and all rooms have track hoists and en-suite facilities.



Cancer test for Wales

A breast cancer screening test which is specifically designed for women over 50 with disabilities has been set up by the NHS in Wales.

The tests will be conducted in GP's surgeries at centres which have been designed for access and can accommodate carers.

The plan is for the women to be requested to come for a test on a three-yearly basis.

For information contact Breast-Test Wales at 18 Cathedral Road, Cardiff CF1 9LJ, tel: (01222) 397222; 24 Alexandra Road, Swansea SA1 5DY, tel: (01792) 459988, or at Maesdu Road, Llandudno, Conwy LL30 1QZ, tel: (01492) 860888.

Last past the post?

Are disabled people still being left behind in the elections? Lisa Hitchen finds out

October is the month when councils across the country tell us: "Don't lose your right to vote." They churn out brown forms which duly arrive on the doormat asking us to register for the elections.

Many will decide not to bother to take up their rights. But for disabled people the path to voting rights is still blocked with obstacles such as inaccessible polling booths.

This is one of the concerns of Right to Vote!, an umbrella group of London voluntary organisations who work with disabled and older people and those with mental health problems to raise awareness of their voting needs.

Last month its report, *Right to Vote! - access to the democratic process*, questioned all 33



Hurray: Angela Drane of Scope's executive council finds an accessible polling station in Redditch

was one of those exposed by the report for not responding to the survey.

Helen Burley a spokeswoman for Age Concern and a member of Right to Vote! said: "We would want to ask why Councillor Harris is acting in different ways in wearing his different hats. He appears to be giving out different messages."

Mr Harris told DN: "My letter in support of Right to Vote!'s campaign was on behalf of both Haringey Council and the ALG. I was annoyed the report said we had not responded. I have written to Right to Vote! about this."

Mr Harris said the council had a policy to review access and is working to improve it.

Ann Young, disability officer for Norwich City Council, is determined that election issues will not be ignored by her council: she has just begun research into how disabled people gain access to the democratic process.

She said: "I am looking at all areas of the electoral process, from having a vote and using it to becoming a councillor. Many disabled people have expectations of not being involved in local government. It is quite difficult to change their attitudes."

Right to Vote! is hoping to change attitudes. It wants the Government to bring in national, enforceable regulations which will make the electoral process more accessible.

Another organisation that has lobbied for change is Scope. It organised two campaigns, *Polls Apart* and *Polls Apart 2* which focused on access during the last two general elections.

Scope's campaigns manager, Jane Enticott, feels the charity's work has had an impact on policy. She said: "The

Government has taken up all issues that were raised by our surveys."

So with nine elections on the cards over the next two years, what is the Government doing? Home Office Minister, George Howarth, has set up a working

'We need minimum requirements so that disabled people can vote in person on the day.'

party on electoral procedures, which is examining access for disabled people.

In August the group pub-

lished its review of the electoral system which has put forward a number of proposals. These include stepping up guidance on disability issues, a system of rolling electoral registration and introducing polling aids for disabled people. A significant move is the agreement of the working party to provide grants for permanent ramps instead of temporary ones at polling stations.

The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions is also looking into the electoral process. Its White Paper, *Modern Local Government - In Touch with*

the People, launched in July is considering ideas such as voting over the Internet and having mobile polling stations in supermarkets.

But will supermarkets be receptive to the idea? DN asked Tesco, Sainsbury and Safeway what they thought of the idea of mobile polling stations in their stores. All three were positive.

A spokeswoman for Tesco said: "In the local elections we had polling booths at two stores. We are planning to do this again. Our stores have reasonable disabled access so we should be able to have booths that are more accessible than at ordinary polling stations."

Karen Edmunds, director of the Greater London Association of Disabled People and member of Right to Vote!, is in favour of such changes but says they should not be an alternative to making ordinary polling stations accessible. "We need to give local authorities leeway to try out new ways of voting," she said. "But we need minimum requirements so that disabled people can vote in person wherever they are in the UK on election day."

People should register their vote by 10 October 1998.



Howarth: set up working party

London boroughs about electoral access in the run up to the local elections and the Greater London Assembly referendum last May.

It found many were still excluding older and disabled voters from elections because of lack of money. Respondents said they did not have funds to spend on providing election materials in other formats such as tape or Braille or on improving physical access.

The report found some boroughs did demonstrate good practice such as including maps and access details on polling cards. Yet the report claimed these ideas were not shared between boroughs. One in five boroughs failed to respond at all.

Right to Vote!'s campaign has been supported by the Association of London Government (ALG). Its chairman, Toby Harris, issued a circular on the campaign objectives to all London boroughs. Yet his own council, Haringey,



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Missing out on a bronze

Britain managed fourth place at the World Wheelchair Games in August.

The games at Stoke Mandeville saw the USA come top with 27 medals including ten golds.

They were followed by two dark horses – Taiwan and Iran – in second and third place.

Britain took six gold medals, eight silvers and seven bronzes. They grabbed gold, silver and

bronze in the snooker, while Karen Pearson took a power-lifting gold with a 42.5kg lift.

Jim Munkley helped Britain to three golds in the table tennis, taking the honours in his section of the men's singles, and with Paul Davies in both the men's tetraplegic team event and the doubles.

In the rugby the Brits also took gold by beating Japan in the final by 25-22.



Sailing home: John Corley and John Hollingsworth from London on the way to coming second in the Special Olympics Sailing Championships last month. The Portsmouth team won overall.



Stoddart spikes a shot as Britain go down 3-1 to Canada in Poland

Poland puts on a valiant stand

Poland took the gold in the World Championships in standing volleyball on home territory in September.

The unusual sport is open to physically disabled people who can stand.

Britain could manage only sixth place in the tournament based in Olsztyn, after they lost their first three games and so came bottom of their qualification group. In the play-offs for the lower rankings they made up some ground by managing a

3-2 win against the Czech Republic. But they then lost 3-1 to Canada.

Poland, bronze medallist in the event in the Paralympics, stole the show, beating Germany 3-2 in the final.

David McCray, 35, who is coordinator of the British team, insisted there were positive things to take from the event.

"We have increased our place in the world rankings," he told DN. "The attacking of Leslie Stoddart was excellent."

Bowled over in Jo'burg

South Africa were victorious on home turf at the World Bowls Championships in August.

The hosts took 34 medals in all, including ten gold, at the Johannesburg-based event.

But the Great Britain team put in a gritty performance to come second, with seven golds, five silvers and five bronzes.

In the visually impaired categories, George Wright took a singles gold, while Rosa Crean and Hugh Mathear, and Margeret Lyne and Keith Brenton, took golds in their mixed pairs.

In their wheelchair category, Jean Dean and Penny Tyler also took golds in the pairs.

Bob Lowe, Great Britain's bowls coordinator, was enthusiastic. "The team were marvellous," he said, "bowling better than was expected. The organisation was second-to-none and the weather was great."

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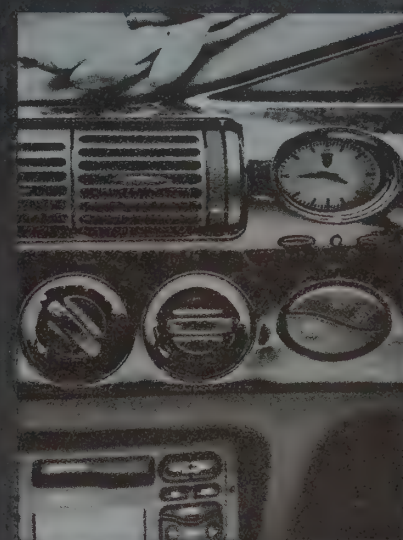
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'The word equality includes quality'

Carrying her son up and down his primary school's stairs hasn't benefited Catherine Ford in the long term

My son Anthony is a bright 12-year-old disabled wheelchair user. This year I was forced to teach my son at home because my local education authority, Camden, refused to offer him a school with acceptable educational standards. They only offered a failing school.

At five years old he was welcomed at his local mainstream primary school – a Victorian building. After a change of head teacher, the school refused to keep his classroom on the ground floor. For a year I carried my son up and down the steps to his new classroom. Then I refused to continue and battled for a lift to avoid Anthony's expulsion for being disabled. Eventually the school was made accessible and now provides for up to six physically disabled pupils.

Having accessed the primary school it would have been sensible to access the local secondary school too. Where else will these kids go?

Anthony's primary school feeds Hampstead Comprehensive, a wheelchair ride apart, and a school with standards close to the national average. We are asking for a modest standard of education for our child – not those of Harriet Harman or Tony Blair.

Camden promised to access two secondary schools two



Mother's pride: it's all smiles during Anthony's home tuition

GRAHAM BOOL PHOTOGRAPHY

years ago. However, it has made cost an excuse – a joke when Camden residents read about vast sums wasted by council departments. Camden has only accessed one secondary school at the other side of the borough and it has the lowest level of achievement.

Core values are mentioned, but rarely implemented. The only secondary school they have accessed was as a by-product of other major work

on the school. The only primary school they have accessed was in response to our pressure.

Camden's five core values include "ensuring all learners are valued equally and are entitled to high quality educational opportunities" and offering "a comprehensive community education service". It's unwritten sixth core value is perhaps: "All disabled learners are only entitled to low quality educational opportunities and

must leave their community to get it".

This is a national problem.

Barnet Authority has also accessed the lowest performing school in its borough and Camden tried to force us to send Anthony to this school.

David Blunkett states: "Where all children are included as equal partners in the school community the benefits are felt by all. That is why we are committed to comprehensive

and enforceable civil rights for disabled people".

Yet Anthony still waits for his rights. He says: "I am sad that I cannot go to Hampstead school with all my friends. I am bright and I want a good education". (See his poem below).

Like other families we are being forced to move. We are leaving our family home after 20 years and going to Harrow which has accessed a school with far better standards.

This leaves two vital questions. Firstly, why don't authorities make mainstream schools accessible? Cost perhaps – but check how much your authority wastes elsewhere. Secondly, why is it that when schools are made accessible they are often the poor quality ones?

After all, the word equality includes quality.

Steps mean stopped

*Steps horrible steps and
they are everywhere
Steps into the shop
Steps into the school
Steps down and onto the tube
Steps onto the bus
Steps into the taxi
Steps up to my bed
Steps into my kitchen
Steps into my house*

*Steps stop me doing things I
want to do
Steps stop me going to my
school*

*Steps stop me going to cinemas
Steps stop me going to theatres
Steps stop me going to my
library*

So no books for me

*Steps stop me going to my
friends' houses*

*Steps stop me going on the
Tube to the airport*

*Steps stop me going to my
playground*

*Steps stop me going on the
train to Kew Gardens*

So no school trips for me

*Steps make me:
Sad, Mad, Angry, Depressed
Desperate, Worried, Frustrated
Frightened, Nervous, Cheated*

*I feel grey with frustration
I feel grey with sadness*

I feel grey with worry

I feel grey with depression

STEPS ARE GREY

*I feel red with anger
I feel red with fury*

That steps get in my way

*Stone Man who throws
down steps*

*You could throw in a lift or
two at the Tube*

At my school

At my library

At my cinema

I am outraged Stone Man

*If you don't change my world
I and my iron chariot
Will bulldoze away*

These grey steps

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LEVO **Stand up for yourself.**

Will Margaret Hodge, the new Minister for Disabled People, fight her corner like her predecessor did? Mary Wilkinson finds out

It was not an auspicious start. Alan Howarth, the "champion" of disabled people in their fight for full civil rights, parent of a disabled child, lost his job as Under-Secretary of State for Employment and Equal Opportunities (also known as the Minister for Disabled People) in July. The Prime Minister appointed Margaret Hodge – Margaret who? – instead.

Another popular minister, Baroness Hollis at the DSS, also went in the reshuffle. Was disability being downgraded by Tony Blair?

Margaret Hodge's first public announcement on 8 September, cutting the small employers exemption from the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to 15 employees (it had been 20), infuriated disability groups. They were hoping that only companies with two or less employees would become exempt. "Discrimination in industry lives on," Lord Ashley, co-chair of the All Party Disability Group, commented bitterly.

By the end of that week, though, the Government's Disability Rights Task Force (DRTF), which includes some of the most influential people in the disability world, had been mollified. As chair, Margaret Hodge listened to their criticism of the exemption, disclaimed personal responsibility for it, rallied the DRTF to pragmatic partnership between the business and disability communities so as to make change work, and ran through a heavy agenda with panache. She also sent some Home Office officials packing – they wanted the armed forces and fire brigades to be exempt from the DDA.

"She could see the discrimination there clearly," says Rachel Hurst, chair of the campaigning group Rights Now!. "She has a reputation for fighting discrimination in race and gender and she obviously wants to learn. We are working with her and hoping our message gets through."

"I've always been at the cutting edge of issues around equality," Margaret Hodge told DN. She introduced ethnic monitoring in housing allocation among other things while chair of the London Borough of Islington's housing committee in the '70s, (she was given an MBE in 1978), and she also brought in some of the first workplace nurseries. From 1982 to 1992 she was

Left, but never loony

leader of Islington Council, bolstered by a big Labour majority. Her media image was of a "loony left" leader, with an abrasive style and a well-heeled background.

Frances Hasler, director of the Islington Disablement Association in the '80s, now co-director of the National Centre for Independent Living, dismisses the "loony left" label as just mud-slinging.

To her, Margaret Hodge was "mainstream left", following progressive policies in the face

'I do want to make a real improvement in people's lives'

of Tory government rate-capping, and this sometimes rubbed off on local disabled people. They were included, for example, in council discussions about a housing design guide and about special services well before the Community Care Act.

Margaret Hodge grasps issues fast and likes to get things done, says Frances Hasler. "I once lobbied her about something on the steps of the town hall, and



Positive action: Margaret Hodge as leader of Islington Council
LARRY BULAITIS/J A HAMILTON STUDIOS

by the time we had got to the top she had come to a decision".

The "bossy" label is hard for a woman to live down. Sitting in her small office on the seventh floor of the plush Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) building, Margaret Hodge, 54 that very day, is cheerful, friendly and informal, pinning you with large dark eyes, liberally mascaraed, as she deals with the jibe about being "well-heeled".

Determined? Yes, definitely.

Born into the Oppenheimer family, she says she had a



The new Minister for Disabled People: "The ball is in her court"

comfortable upbringing, which took in LSE and a BSc in economics.

But the family were immigrants from Germany via Egypt, where she was born. "I've always been slightly an outsider," she says. "My values were formed by being an immigrant and finding the class ridden nature of British society rather difficult to come to terms with."

Now married to a solicitor who specialises in legal rights and legal aid, she has two daughters. The Blairs used to be dinner-party neighbours.

From Islington, Margaret Hodge went to Price Waterhouse as a consultant, before winning the Barking by-election in 1994. Since then she has been on various Commons committees. Most recently she was co-chair of the Education and Employment Select Committee.

Theresa May, now Shadow Minister for Disabled People, worked with her there.

She says: "Margaret tends to have clear views on things and isn't afraid to express them even if they are in disagreement with groups she is dealing with".

She knows about education, including the early years and special needs, but not, Mrs May thinks, much about disability. "Will the momentum still be there to push the interests of disabled people, that's the question. It will be important over the next few months because of what the Social Services Department does on disability benefits."

Margaret Hodge has had little contact with disability except a daughter who has become blind in one eye. "I've got a bad back", she quips.

She thinks "it's daft" to fear that disability is slipping down the Government's agenda. "I'm

just building on what has been a very solid foundation that Alan (Howarth) has created."

Although she will chair the inter-ministerial working group on disability, she is not a member of the Prime Minister's welfare reform group which is discussing the future of benefits. "But, clearly, as far as disabled people are concerned, we are talking about opportunity – turning dependency into opportunity – and therefore the work we do has got to be 'joined up'."

Of the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), she says: "I warmly support the white paper as it has gone out". She

could not say if the DRC would be set up next year, only that "We want to implement our commitment as soon as we possibly can." She promised: "There will be appropriate funding for it to be effective".

She confirmed that the DRTF will be discussing the limitations of the DDA, such as education and transport. "There may be some issues that I will want to look at beyond that, for example how good is local government at promoting and securing civil rights in its roles."

She sees exciting job opportunities in the Government's £195 million New Deal for Disabled People and agrees that the money must be used to fund good, existing projects as well as new ones. Building in job retention strategies is "one of the key areas".

She supports comprehensive civil rights for disabled people, but says: "It's important to build consensus around all these changes. You really only achieve change this way, and I'm interested in real change, and I do want to make a real improvement in people's lives."

"I think the ball is in her court," said Neil Betteridge, RADAR's head of policy and campaigns. "Alan Howarth had a long history of personal and professional contact with the issues. Margaret Hodge has not got the same credentials. She's got to earn them."

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Don't flap at Faludy

One court case should not put you off the idea of student grants, says Lisa Hitchen

Despite what the tabloids may say, Alexander Faludy was misguided to apply for local council funding for his degree.

The parents of the gifted dyslexic pupil thought Portsmouth City Council should provide money for his Cambridge University course.

However a judge ruled over the summer that they were wrong and backed the council's decision not to fund the course.

The fact is that disabled prospective students – no matter what their age – are funded nationally. Councils only administer grants.

Skill, the national bureau for students with disabilities, believes many potential students will be confused by the case.

Assistant director Sophie Corlett says much misinformation has been put

about. "Many people won't realise money is there and it is easy to get," she says.

Indeed it is. This year for the first time the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), which is paid to disabled students to cover the extra costs they may have, will not be means-tested. So any disabled students who got no money last year should re-apply.

There is also more money available overall, especially to help you get a carer. You can now get up to £10,000 a year for non-medical personal helpers – double what was available last year. There's an extra £155 for specialist equipment too.

You may need an assessment from an educational psychologist. But even if you were refused help before, don't be put off from applying again.

Who's there to help

- Information charity Cando has a website (cando.lancs.ac.uk) which contains disability statements for all UK universities.
- Skill (tel: 0171-978 9890 or minicom: 0171-738 7722) has a series of leaflets on education and employment.
- The Department for Education and Employment (tel: 0800-731 9133) provides *Bridging the Gap*, a guide for disabled students entering higher education. It also has a website with more details at: www.open.gov.uk/dfee.dfechome.htm.
- The RNIB (tel: 0345-023 153) has an information pack for blind students which costs £5, available in print, Braille, disk or on tape.
- The Department of Trade and Industry's "IT for All" project offers information on information technology. Its helpline (tel: 0800-456 567) can advise disabled students about equipment.



CRISPIN HUGHES/PHOTOFUSION

Ivory towers still shut

Access at colleges needs much improvement, says Lisa Hitchen

There were around 56,000 disabled students in colleges across the country last year.

Yet for the moment the "goods and services" part of the Disability Discrimination Act excludes education. Colleges can still discriminate against people on disability grounds and premises need not be accessible.

The only thing higher education colleges have to do at present is produce "disability statements" which outline their facilities for disabled people – or lack of them.

Skill, the national bureau for disabled students, says that is not enough. "Many universities see disability provision as an asset, not something they should provide," says assistant director Sophie Corlett.

Getting it right

Campaigners want to see a baseline level of provision – a set of rules which universities must meet to ensure they all have adequate access. This is

what the Funding Councils of England and Wales are looking into. They have commissioned research into what should be included in the rules. This will be published later this month.

Skill hopes the baseline will include disability advisors at all institutions, agreements between the individual and the institution, and a strategy to improve access.

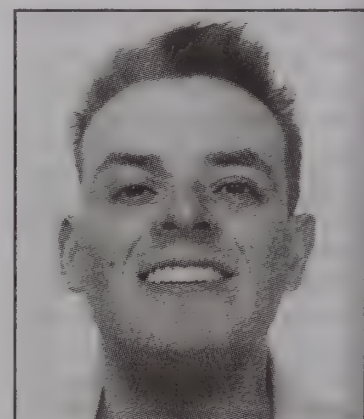
Disability advisors – at those universities which have them – would also like to see the Disabled Students' Allowance go to part-time students and postgraduates, as proposed by the Dearing Report and Lord Snowdon's survey (*DN*, September). Alan Hurst at the University of Central Lancashire also wants central government money set aside to make colleges accessible.

But staff behaviour can also cause problems. Jamie Hill, a student at the University of East London, has a hearing impairment. He says: "Some lecturers are helpful and others

are not. If I can't see the lecturer to lipread, I can't hear what is being said. I have come home crying at times."

Hope for the future

Things might change: the Disability Rights Taskforce is committed to extending civil rights, including access to education. It is due to report to the Government on this next July. A change in attitude – and legislation – might come then.



Serious study at Lambeth College (*top*), but Jamie Hill (*above*) finds lecturers difficult

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Hope in charity

Working for a disability charity is not a cop out if you yourself are disabled, says Rod Hermeston. It can be a rewarding experience

Disability is big business, with groups for almost everything, it seems, and disabled people are increasingly asking for a piece of the action.

So what are the benefits of working for a disability organisation and what opportunities are out there?

Organisations vary from large and small national charities to small local bodies such as centres for integrated living. How do you get your foot in the door?

Many organisations advertise in the disability as well as the general press. So keep your eyes peeled. Some specify jobs are for a disabled person only or guarantee an interview for those meeting the essential job qualifications. If you lack real work experience, even personal experience such as managing your own carer could help you meet the necessary skills requirements.

You could also try volunteering to help you gain extra knowledge and abilities. Many disability organisations give volunteers training. Failing that, the Government's New Deal for people on Jobseekers Allowance also has placements within the voluntary sector, including disability charities.

Work in these organisations can be rewarding and the

organisations themselves can be very supportive.

Just ask wheelchair user David Colley, a development worker at Disability Action North East (DANE) who has personal experience of the support such groups can offer.

"It was a nightmare trying to get equipment from the



Maria Butcher: happy worker

Government's Access to Work scheme," he says. "DANE stepped in to provide support for my first four months. They understood the issues. Working within the disability field is a way of developing skills within a supportive environment, ploughing that back into our community and developing a career. Everybody wins."

He hopes opportunities for disabled people will increase.

"There is a sea change happening," he says, "which recognises that in order to address disabled people's issues, it should be disabled people working on them."

Maria Butcher, 31, of Dagenham, who is deaf, has recently started as a membership development executive at the Royal National Institute for Deaf People.

She says: "At the RNID staff are more deaf aware than the average company so communication is not so much of an issue."

Lorraine Bellamy, 41, of London, who has a learning disability and works in the post room at Mencap, thinks she is getting a better deal than she would elsewhere. She says: "If I was not working for Mencap I do not think I would be in such a nice job. It would probably be factory work."

But how easy it is to get a job with disability groups is questionable, as our survey of ten of leading charities shows.

Anne Rae, chair of the British Council of Disabled People, thinks charities are more open to disabled people than mainstream employers.

"A lot of disability organisations are making much more effort to introduce good working practices," she says.

But she argues that they should get it right – and that includes providing disabled people with adequate training opportunities so they can further their careers.

Large groups which employ only a few disabled people should ask themselves what they are doing wrong, she says. And she also backs guaranteed interviews as disabled people cannot get job search skills from inaccessible job clubs.

Sue Maynard Campbell, chair of the Association of Disabled Professionals, says groups must ensure any adjustments disabled employees need are met properly.

"Good practice says an organisation should have a central budget for this rather than it being something a department has to suffer, so there is equality of approach," she says.

So while there may be many attractions to working for disability groups, there are also real drawbacks and you need to check your chosen organisation carefully before signing up.

Our survey should help you get started.



A pleasant post: Lorraine Bellamy enjoys work at Mencap

DN's charity survey

We sent surveys to 12 disability charities, asking them:

- 1) What percentage of jobs they advertise in the disability press
- 2) How many people they employ
- 3) What percentage of senior managers are disabled people
- 4) What percentage of line managers are disabled people
- 5) What their overall percentage of disabled employees is

Ten of them answered, and we asked them if they could make any of these claims about their policy:

- ✓ We have an equal opportunities policy
- We guarantee interviews to suitably qualified disabled applicants
- Some jobs (expressed as a proportion of the total number of jobs in the group) are specified as being for disabled people only
- ♥ We fund adjustments and meet the employer contribution to Access to Work from a central budget.
- ✕ Our departmental managers pay for these adjustments and Access to Work contributions from their budgets.

How they fared

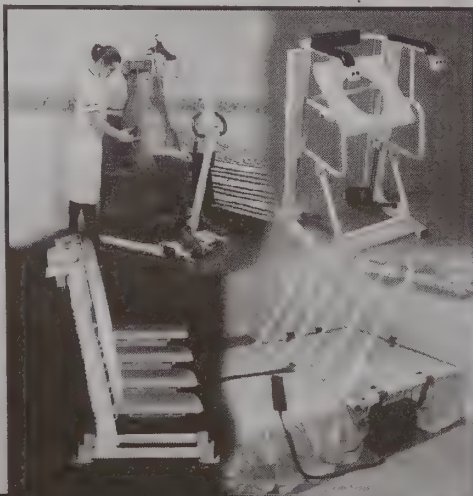
British Council of Disabled People:	(1) 100% (2) 12 (3) 100% (4) 100% (5) 100% ✓ ■ (100%) ✕
British Deaf Association:	(1) 90% (2) 40 (3) 50% (4) 50% (5) 25% ✓ ● ■ (10%) ✕
Greater London Association of Disabled People:	(1) 100% (2) 10 (3) 100% (4) 50% (5) 70% ✓ ● ■ (75%) ♥
Mencap:	(1) Wherever possible (2) 4,500 (3) 2% (4) 6% (5) 1.4% ✓ ● ✕
National Federation of the Blind:	(1) 100% (2) 4 (3) 0% (4) 0% (5) 0% ✓ ♥
Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation:	(1) 0% (2) 36 (3) 50% (4) 50% (5) 60% ✓ ● ♥
Royal National Institute for Deaf People:	(1) 100% (2) 1,267 (3,4,5) Being counted ✓ ● ■ (n/a) ✕
Royal National Institute for the Blind:	(1) Don't know (2) 2,700 (3,4) altogether 8% (5) 7% ✓ ■ (n/a) ✕
Scope:	(1) Not known (2) 4,000 (3) 7% (4) 6% (5) Around 3% ✓ ● ✕
Spinal Injuries Association:	(1) Don't know (2) Over 40 (3,4) Altogether 40% (5) 30% ✓ ● ■ (n/a) ♥
<i>Mind and Leonard Cheshire failed to reply satisfactorily in the time given.</i>	

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Brmm, brmm in Brum

What can you expect to find at the Motor Show? David Griffiths gives *DN* readers a preview



Gowrings Chairman version of the Vauxhall Sintra



Honda's stylish 5-door estate, the Civic Aero deck



Super mini Sirion from Daihatsu is claimed to do 42.8 mpg

Yes, The British Motor Show (that's the REAL one) is almost upon us, bringing promises of even bigger and brighter things to see.

Ten world debuts are promised, including the new Lexus, a luxury model from Rover, the Austin Healey Sprite (remember those little frog-eyes? Well they're back), a sporty rag-top from Jensen and the next generation Jaguar.

Theme and special days include classic cars (29 October), motor sport (30 and 31 October), and adventure day (1 November).

The London-Cape Town reliability trial, an 11,500 mile epic event believed to be the longest rally ever held for vintage and classic cars, will be flagged off on 23 October at 2pm, offering visitors a unique chance to see motor history in the making.

There are opportunities to meet famous road folk like Damon Hill, Colin McCrae, Derek Warwick and John Cleland.

Special provision is made for disabled visitors, and the show, at the NEC in Birmingham, opens on 21 October, and closes on 1 November.

For more information and ticket reservations, tel: 0121-767 4455. Internet browsers can find up to date details on <http://www.smmmt.co.uk> e-mail: exhibitions@smmmt.co.uk.

Although the Motor Show is the place to show your new products, not all manufacturers wait until then to put their latest models on the road.

Recent newcomers of interest to users with a disability include Daewoo's new baby, the Matiz. It arrived in the showrooms on 3 September.

Daewoo claim that whilst Matiz won't become the ultimate accessory for lycra-clad couples, it offers common-sense practical motoring for contemporary driving conditions in a nice body. Just 800cc with three cylinders, yet it has room for four six-footers. There is power steering, and three years or 60,000 miles of free servicing with warranty. Its insurance is just group 2.

Initially, only a 5-speed manual transmission will be available, but a semi-automatic electric power train is scheduled for release in early 1999. Expect to get 45-50 mpg. More information from Mark Carberry, tel: (01923) 713369.

Another new car, launched in June, is a super mini from Daihatsu, the Sirion. Again, three cylinders (a bit of a Daihatsu tradition) but at 989cc a mite more punch than the Matiz, with 4-speed automatic transmission and a claimed fuel consumption of 42.8 mpg. It is just 3.6 metres long, and if the gap ahead of you looks a little too narrow, there are electric door mirrors which incorporate a "fold-flat" feature. Anti-lock brakes are an option; power steering is standard. More information on freephone, tel: 0800-618 618.

Honda's stylish 5-door estate Civic Aero deck slipped quietly into the field in April with so little fuss that few people seem to realise it is here.

Available on contract hire from Motability, it offers superb reliability and quality in an attractive package with many of the nice touches that Honda owners take for granted, like courtesy lights, air conditioning, speed-sensitive power steering, anti-lock brakes and things that don't fall off.

The automatic version is claimed to offer a fuel consumption in the mid 30mpgs, and for those who cringe at the thought of another import, they're made in Britain. For brochures, prices and dealer details, tel: 0181-746 9145.

Mazda introduced their Demio to Britain in August. There's a 1.3 litre engine with power steering, electric

sunroof, electric windows front and rear, higher seating level with a multi-adjustable seating system which includes height adjustment for the driver.

Alas, only one model is on offer, without automatic transmission. For more information, tel: (01892) 502593.

Gowrings have sunk some investment in the Vauxhall Sintra people carrier, coming up with a Chairman version carrying four people plus a wheelchair user. Access is in time honoured Chairman tradition, and the Sintra has won praise for its comfort and drive quality. For more information, tel: (01635) 529500.

Correction: *Carmobility* (DN September), tel: (01395) 568830.

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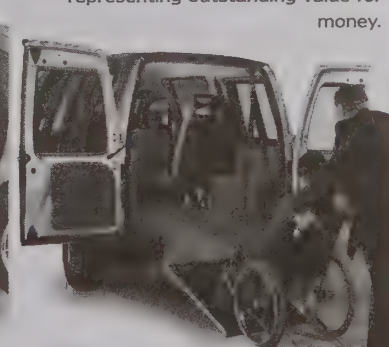


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Letters to the Editor



Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW
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 E-mail: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

Employers don't want me

I have a first-class honours degree in software engineering as well as substantial experience of commercial computer programming.

Due to a serious illness I am now deafblind and confined to a wheelchair.

I have been very disappointed with the Government's efforts to get disabled people into work. Despite my impairments, I am still able to work as a programmer. I do not need further training beyond the basic rehabilitation I have received and the never failing support of my family and organisations like Sense and the National Library for the Blind.

But despite 79 applications for jobs I am well suited to, I am still unemployed (not even an interview). Contrast this to before my illness, when from eight applications I had eight job offers.

Employer-ignorance is the only factor which can explain my continued unemployment and, hence, my reliance on benefits. When is the Government going to recognise and address that crucial factor?

I have always been advised to be open about my disabilities on application forms. What do you recommend? Should I not mention it and risk turning up to an interview without the interviewer knowing my needs?

If I said nothing on my application form and was offered the job straight off, are employers allowed to change their minds about the offer when I tell them I am disabled?

Jane Porter
 London E 14

Trainer/consultant in disability, Phil Friend (tel: (01707) 324466), advises that under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) you can't expect reasonable adaptations unless you tell the employer your needs, so that was the right thing to do.

If you are rejected, ask the employer why. If you are not satisfied with his reply, and think you may have been discriminated against, seek legal advice from your local CAB.

Phil meets employers, large and small, who want to offer jobs to disabled people like you but don't get the applicants.

Accountants rule the roost

About your articles on Ford withdrawing from Motability and possible cash cuts by the DSS (DN, September), are we to be ruled by accountants?

For years Motability Finance Limited has been under a cloud. Now it is starting to work properly and someone in the accounts department thinks they can do better than the professionals and make more money. To withdraw mainten-

ance so that someone who offers the lowest cost can do the work does not mean a better or safer way to run our cars.

Taking over the responsibility for the "residual value" and selling them on is like chopping off your nose to spite your face.

Leave well alone and let the people who know what they are doing get on with it, for in the end we the customers will only suffer by the loss of manufacturers

who leave this scheme.

If speculation over Government plans to cut Incapacity Benefit by up to 25 per cent is right, it will take us back to the dark ages, thanks once again to the accountants. Save, save.

Who cares that disabled people who rely on benefits such as these to have some sort of existence will live or die?

Roy Austen
 Sompting, West Sussex

Air your experiences

I am an amputee and represent the Limbless Association on the Access to the Skies committee, which has representatives of airlines, air traffic services and the Transport Department on it. The whole aim is to make air travel easier for disabled people.

I did resent one airline saying they only made 87p profit on a passenger on a particular flight because of her disability.

When I consider how economy class passengers subsidise club class and first class folk because they make up the volume, I think it is mean to calculate profit on a passenger because

of her individual needs.

There is not good news on wheelchair services at certain airports either, now that they are on a bonus system to get as many passengers loaded as possible in a given time. That's why, perhaps, we disabled people might feel we are in a Grand Prix whizzing past all the duty free shops at airports to be left in an empty departure lounge for what seems hours.

If anyone has any information about air travel they want aired, my e-mail is alewin1@compuserve.com
 Alan Lewin

A new dawn

I was surprised by the letter from Mandy Hudson (DN, May) that expressed her frustrations about the way many churches discriminate against disabled people.

My survey over two years found that many congregations and clergy have not been made

aware of disabled people's needs.

I have formed a group called Christian Dawn to help churches come to terms with their fears and prejudices by using Bible teachings. If anyone wishes to share their experiences, please write.

Eric Bridgwater
 349 Simmons Drive
 Quinton, Birmingham B32 2UH

Sign language interpreters

In the article about video-phones putting deaf people in contact with sign language interpreters (DN, August), James Strachan of the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, is cited as saying that there are 50 interpreters for sign language users in the UK.

This figure is not correct. Whilst I do not have the exact figures, the Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP) would.

Paul Bartlett (email)

The CACDP says there are 104 qualified interpreters and 190 trainees - Editor

DN's diary

by Dan Batten

Sticky wicket

The Sun has issued an unreserved apology to a disabled cricket fan after it "inadvertently" blacked her out of a picture of England's victory celebrations over South Africa electronically. It re-ran the picture on 19 August, including wheelchair user Shelley Anne Emry. Nice of them to apologize, but I think Shelley Anne should hit them for six rather than just a single.

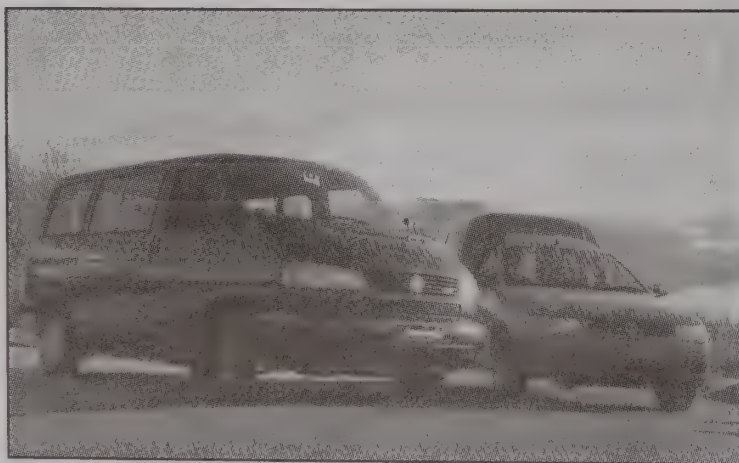
Potty!

Steve Gilks is to travel from Lands End to John O' Groats to raise money for the charity Help The Hospices ... on a motorised toilet. Steve has managed to persuade British Aerospace to convert his caravan toilet into a three wheeled battery powered mile muncher with a top speed of 5mph for his summer '99 trip. Good luck Steve, even if the idea is totally round the bend.

Dan writes: If you have come across any examples of outrage or stupidity - or something really positive - let me know. Write to DN's Diary, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW, or tel: 0171-619 7323.

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Designer Alexander McQueen used disabled models in *Dazed and Confused* magazine not to be controversial but as a “joyful celebration of difference”. One model, Mat Fraser, gives his view

As far as the fashion world is concerned, I believe we disabled people are invisible – as we are in the advertising industry. Both sell images that the public aspire to (I don’t need to tell you that those aspirations do not usually include being disabled). And from the product manufacturer’s viewpoint, using disabled people to sell their goods would be financial lunacy.

This is the world’s advertising culture that I’ve learnt to try and reject, with its racism, divisions based on power and greed, sexism and cruelty, all fueled by the greedy. It’s sometimes a hard place, ut it’s the place I live in.

Yes, I’m quite political and cynical, and I didn’t exactly think the *Dazed and Confused* Alexander McQueen session was going to change the world.

But after meeting the team, who seemed genuinely committed to pushing out some boundaries (including their own) in this “invisible” world of fashion, I took the opportunity to be in the session. I felt fine about that because these sorts of chances should be taken as long as the terms and conditions are ok and the end result is positive images of disabled people. Within a fashion context, I think they were.

Yes, there should have been facial differences, wheelchair users, black models, older, bigger, etc, and perhaps a less feminine female image in there.

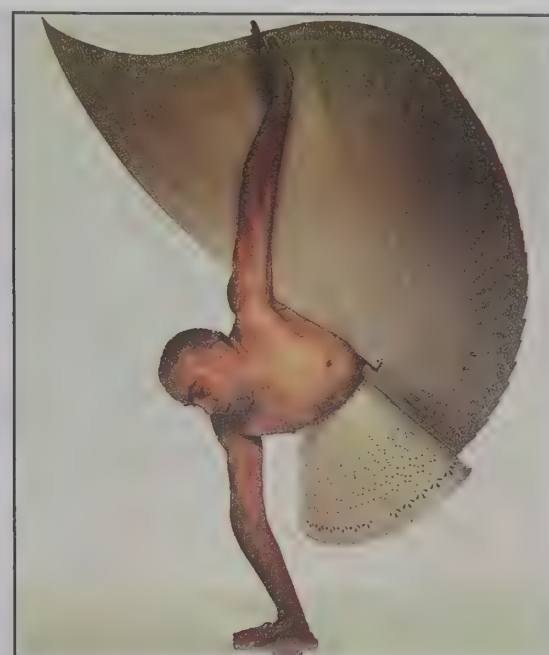
Certainly, lumping us all together in our own “special” section could be seen as ghettoising. Ultimately, though, it’s another rock chipped away at the walls of our prison. Maybe this one’s from more of an inside than an outside position. I think that’s good.

So, if you ask me: “Don’t you think you’ve sold out?” I’ll stop, look you in the eye and say: “No, I’m just trying to be a social model”.

Reprinted by kind permission of Dazed and Confused magazine. Concept: Alexander McQueen. Photography: Nick Knight. Styling: Katy England. Make up: Val Garland. Hair: Malcolm Edwards. Computer: Steve Seal. Nails: Marian Newman.



Mat Fraser wears a waistcoat by Catherine Blades



David Toole in Alexander McQueen’s wooden skirt

Social models



Above: Alison Lapper, fragmentation by Hussein Chalayan. Below: Helen McIntosh in a tweed draped dress made to order by Roland Mouret



Aimee Mullens in wooden fan jacket by Givenchy Couture, Alexander McQueen’s suede t-shirt, and a crinoline frame hired from Angels and Bermans



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Step to it: Dan manages a smile while being put through his paces

Imagine falling through your front door, exhausted after two weeks mayhem in Tenerife when, amongst your post, you notice a sheet from a colleague. It says "You're off to the gym on your first day back". Do I look that bad? This is a sick joke, right?

Wrong. So off I trundle, expecting all manner of pain, to the Sobell Sports Centre in Islington, North London, where a new hi-tech gym, with disabled people amongst its regulars, has just opened.

I'm greeted by Sara Wisbloom, a friendly enough looking personal trainer. Surely she can't be a disciple of evil?

Before we start the pain process, Sara takes me through a short consultation to check my general health and to see what I can and can't do.

"The consultation is to make sure that you get what you

need from a personal training programme, and to make you as independent as possible when exercising," she says.

A recent survey showed that less than 5 per cent of gyms in Britain are fully accessible to disabled people.

There is also no official gym instructor's certificate for the training of disabled gym users.

Sara, formerly of Disability Sport England (DSE), has been working with the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) for four years to create a suitable course for instructors, although the end result is still a long way off.

After establishing what a wreck I am, it's into the chamber of horrors – the gym.

A "gentle" five minute warm-up on the exercise bike starts things off. "You need to make sure your knee, heel and toe are all aligned when on the

The gym



Exercise class: any discerning gym should work through your requirements thoroughly before you use the equipment

bike," says Sara, "as a good posture will make sure your stomach muscles are tightened and used". To my utter amazement, I feel no discomfort at all and, shockingly, start to enjoy myself.

Next came the cross trainer, best described as a weird walking device where the user steps up and down on two pedals, simulating a running effect, and if they choose, rows with arm levers. For the purpose of not breaking my nose, I decline this option.

Another bike ride to "cool me down" follows, then "resistance training" commences. The chest press is the first demon to grin at me.

"This will develop your chest

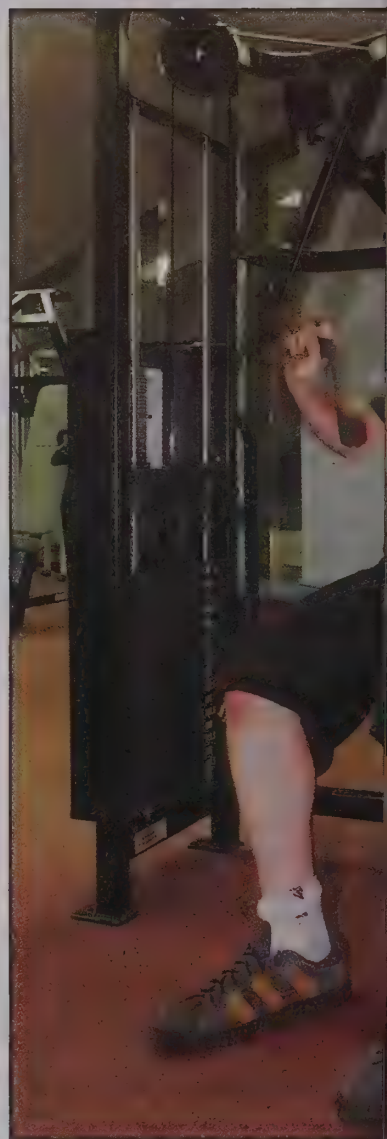
and triceps," says Sara, who is completely bewildered when I tell her I feel no tension in these areas, but in my biceps, which are meant to be relaxing. "Perhaps your body's inverted," muses Sara.

Lateral pull-downs next, to develop my back and shoulders, I'm assured. "And hernias," I argue, to a disdainful look.

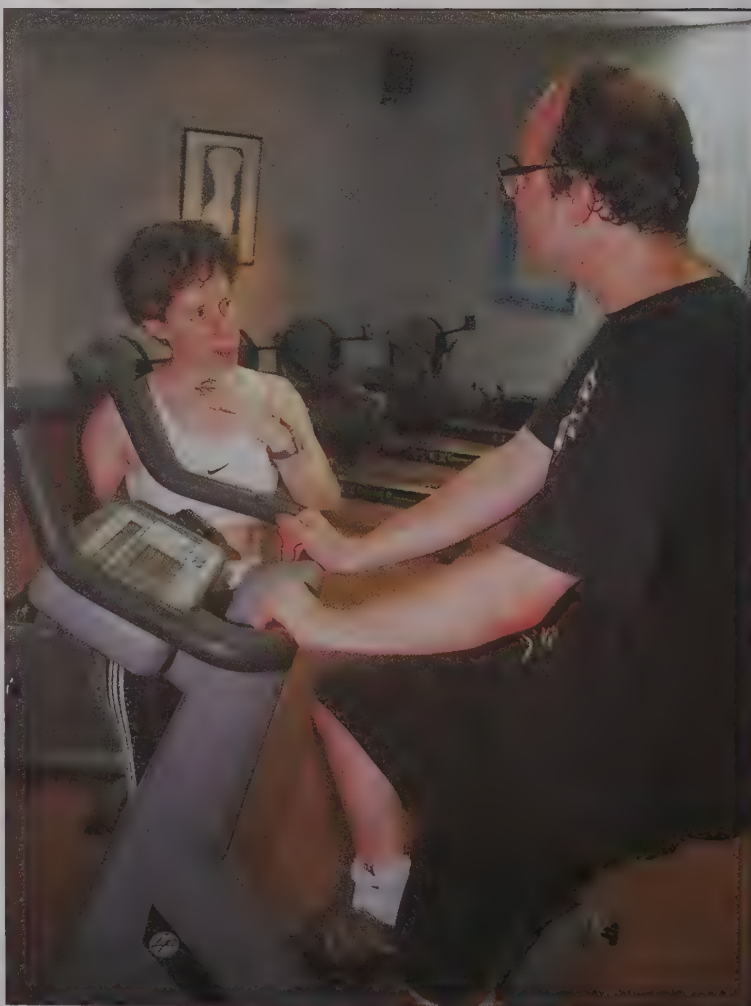
I'm now onto the leg press machine, which I get quite into. The walking in town on Saturdays is showing benefits. More weight on the lift. I've found something I like. I'm feeling good.

Finally, a pull up machine. "This is a fun one," states Sara. I shoot her a disbelieving glare.

To end the session, I do some



stretches, along with back and abdominal work on the floor. "There are machines which will do these, but doing them this way is much more effective."



No wheels good: Dan is taught to use the cycle machine

Contacts

Sobell Sports Centre,
Hornsey Road, London N7,
tel: 0171-609 2166

Aspire, tel: 0181-954 5759

London Sports Forum, tel:
0171-354 8666

CP Sport, tel: 0115-940 1202

Bradfield Sports Centre,

Berkshire, tel: 0118-974

5001, is fully accessible and offers specially trained instructors.

The University of Wales Institute, Cyncoed Site, in Cardiff tel: (01222) 874000, offers a fully accessible gym, and comes recommended by DN's sports writer and wheelchair marathon ace Tanni Grey.

She also suggests checking out Cardiff Athletics Stadium's gym, tel: (01222) 225345

Or you can try contacting your local council's leisure services.

Happy exercising!



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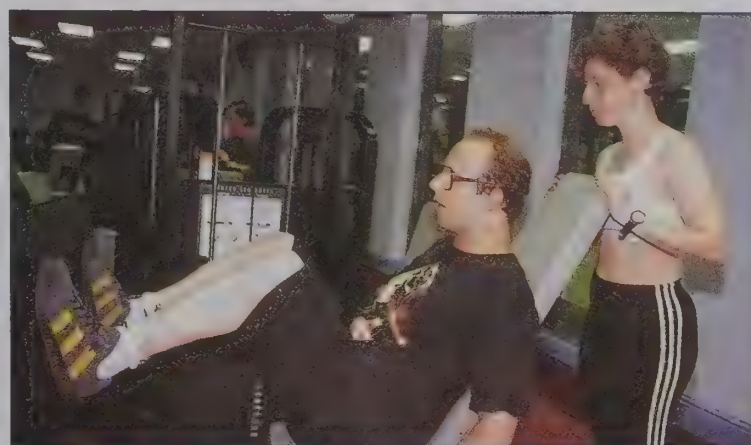


fix it

Pulling weights rather than pints of beer or the opposite sex isn't necessarily the end of the world, as Dan Batten found out to his surprise

When push comes to shove: Dan responds to the camera with some extra effort on his next piece of equipment

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMIE FACER PHOTOGRAPHY



Sitting comfortably? Then exercise can begin



ays my personal whip cracker. "It means you won't walk away and tear muscles." m sold. How much will my transition from flab to fab cost? "There are various options, but a basic gym membership card with concessions costs £2.50 per year, with each visit costing £2.50." desk dweller's going to get fit, what do you?



ing up: remember to stretch before (after) taking strenuous exercise

Hyundai have done it again. Or at least that's what the motoring press would have us believe.

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Motability

Meet sharks or the weather man

What can you do at half-term?

Chris Davies has been to the London Aquarium and the BBC Experience

For the last 13 years I have lived in London – and, like most people who live in the city, I have ignored the potential of exhibitions like The London Aquarium and The BBC Experience.

I shouldn't have. Both are highly enjoyable, well thought out and, for wheelchair users like me, very convenient.

The BBC Experience occupies part of Broadcasting House, from which the BBC national radio services are transmitted; the true home of the BBC.

The first part of the tour is handled by a guide who explains the origins of the BBC, complete with a working model of Marconi's pioneering spark gap generator, the precursor of the wireless. The guide for my party was very entertaining and particularly good with the children.

After the guided part, the rest of the history is conveyed by a recorded commentary mixed with recordings of important events, not simply for the BBC, but for Britain and the world. Incorporating sound effects, a light show and slides, it was



Handy work: put your hands in water and feel the fish slip by

very interesting – but not I suspect for the youngsters.

The third part of the experience is a group of interactive tasks. Some were accessible; some were not. Most involved pushing buttons, which were beyond my reach. However, with the help of my assistant, I was able to become a vision mixer for *Eastenders*.

Even as a spectator, I found this part of the exhibition was great fun. For example, earlier on, most of my party were involved with recording a scene from a radio play, some doing sound effects and some reading parts. The party was then given a chance to hear a recording of their attempt, which was a source of great amusement.



So too were the results of an invitation from the BBC's chief weather forecaster, Bill Giles, to emulate him. Each attempt at



Shark infested waters (above) will thrill you, while early examples of the wireless (left) are fun to explore.



understand at last why people go deep sea diving. Now I think I would if I could.

Neither exhibition has parking spaces reserved for disabled visitors.

At the BBC there are some parking bays nearby, which are available if you're lucky. At the Aquarium you just park as close as you can, the South Bank being the best bet for spaces reserved for disabled visitors.

I recommend both exhibitions. I know now what I've been missing. Hopefully you won't.

To book the BBC Experience at Broadcasting House, Portland Place, London W1, tel: 0870-603 0304. Opening times: Monday 1pm-4.30pm, last tour 4.30pm; Tuesday to Friday 9.30am-4.30pm, last tour 4.30pm; Saturday and Sunday 9.30am-5.30pm, last tour 5.30pm. Adult £6.50, child £4.50, concessions £5.50. Only three wheelchairs at a time. The London Aquarium at the old County Hall, Westminster, is open all year except Christmas Day, Monday to Sunday, 10am-6pm, last admission 5pm. Adult £7, children 3-14 years £5, concessions £6, family ticket £22.

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being a weather presenter was recorded and played back.

Although I did not try this, I could have. The radio play, on the other hand, relied so much on physical activity that, apart from the small number of speaking parts, all I could do was watch. But it was still highly enjoyable.

The BBC Experience is mostly accessible, although there has been no attempt, as far as I can see, to accommodate visitors who are visually or hearing impaired.

You can ring the exhibition for information on access, but, as with the London Aquarium, there are no printed guides about disabled access.

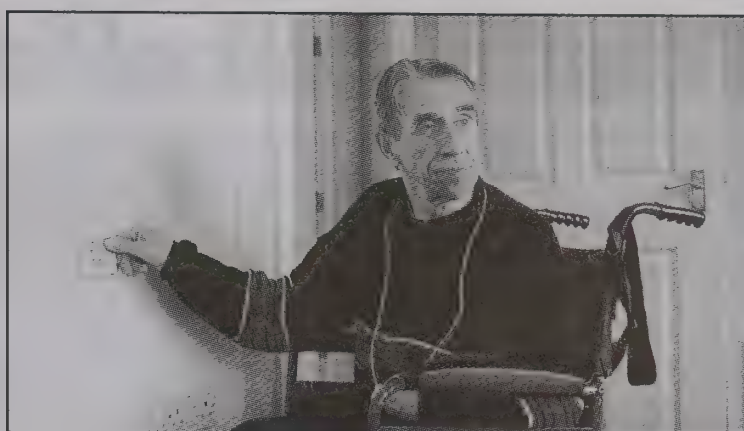
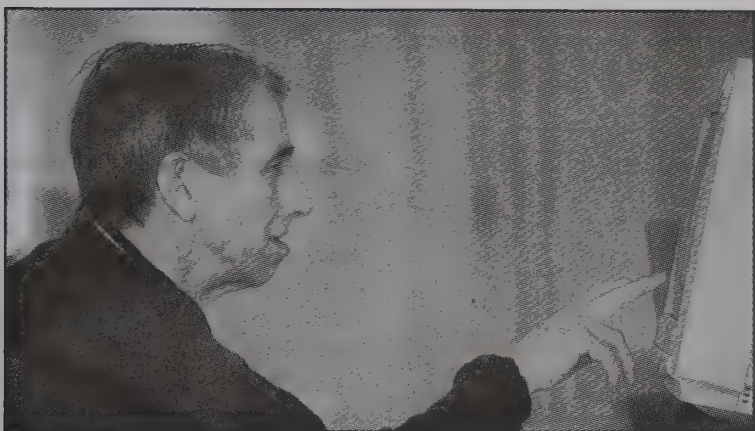
Before visiting the London

Aquarium – 170,000 square feet of floor space, two vast tanks, 39 other exhibits, one million litres of water, all costing £25 million – I had considerable doubts as to how much it would interest me. I had never wanted to know anything about fish.

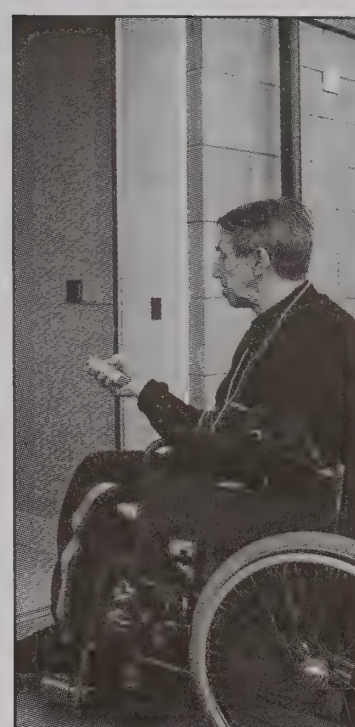
Well, I am now converted. Going round the tanks, I found great beauty and tranquility.

Everything is on the flat and you can see each tank without any obstacles obscuring the view. The only fault I could find was that the illuminating panels giving details of the fish in a tank were often too high on the wall to read easily.

Seeing these fish in their surroundings, such as the beautiful coral, made me



EDINVAR HOUSING ASSOCIATION



Switched-on homes

A new breed of high-tech house will be a blessing for disabled people, says Jez Abbott

It used to be pie in the sky, but interactive technology could soon be under your roof, giving more independence and freedom in the home, say pioneering housing experts.

Pilot schemes across the country are using an array of computer technology to make life easier around the house.

These "smart" houses are aptly named, says Steve Bonner, project coordinator at Scotland's Edinvar Housing Association, which is running one project in Edinburgh.

Around £15,000 of electrical equipment has been wired into its AID (Assisted Interactive Dwelling) house to support and monitor residents. But Bonner insists such homes should not flaunt their technology.

"If you are looking for whizz-bang bells, forget it," he says. "It is important smart houses are like any other home. Technology is hidden or blended into the furniture to avoid confusing residents or intruding too heavily. If someone can see it's a smart home, it has failed."

This is especially important because the AID house and those to follow will be audiovisually linked to a nearby resource centre staffed 24 hours a day. This allows helpers to monitor well-being in a low-key way, and residents can be home alone without feeling under surveillance.

Pressure pads under carpets and a loo with infrared sensors let the carers monitor residents' well-being. If a loo hasn't been flushed for some time, carers may visit to check no one is injured, says Bonner, who is working on the prototype with Sussex University.

South of the border, John Grooms Housing Association is working with Portsmouth Disability Forum, Portsmouth City Council and Portsmouth University to build six homes for disabled people by the year 2000. Three of these will be "smart". The housing

association claims to be the largest builder of wheelchair-standard housing in the UK, and an £100,000 Housing Corporation grant has ensured the project gets a good start.

It has already identified two sites for a flat and a bungalow which John Grooms' research and development officer, Davina Long, says will be more than just wheelchair-friendly.

She says the three "smart" houses "will allow comparison with the conventional houses to see how technology boosts freedom and cuts care costs".

Martin Affleck, the project's consultant architect, says the pace of change is fast. "Within six months we could have monitors that automatically switch off lights and heating as you leave rooms," he says.

Residents do not have to be computer whizz kids to benefit,

however. "People don't want the house working around them. It is vital they have their fingers on the override button."

And to show staff what they are up against, Affleck runs a staff drop-in centre with two wheelchair using helpers to put

'The homes offer cost savings by cutting the use of long term care. Resource centres can be run like satellite offices.'

council employees in the picture. He also runs seminars where designers and staff spend the day in wheelchairs. "If they want to go to the loo," he says, "the chair goes with them."

This first-hand experience should translate into first-class design for disabled residents.

After all, the project is looking at severe disability so there is no room for bad architecture.

When it comes to costs, interactive technology does have financial incentives to win over hard-up councils, Mr Bonner insists. "It offers cost savings by cutting use of long-term care," he says. "Smart homes are good for councils with houses in far-flung places like the Western Isles or rural areas. The resource centres can be run like satellite offices."

But there are drawbacks. "Much of the equipment is only available in Germany or Scandinavia," he says. "It is expensive to buy and install – especially in existing homes where you have to knock holes in walls to wire the house."

For that reason one aim of Edinvar's project, which has a year to run, is to raise

Anti-clockwise from above: Edinvar tenant Bill Bayne enters the AID house, opens its windows and monitors services

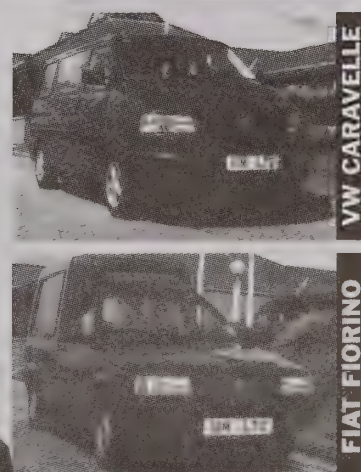
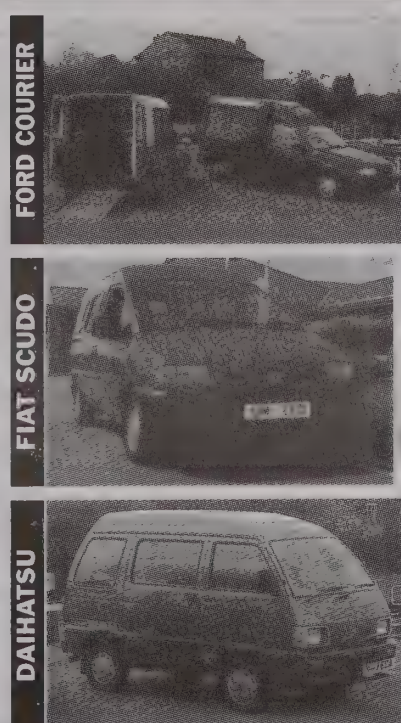
awareness of smart technology and so bring down costs.

For the time being these new-fangled homes will be an exception rather than the norm. But it won't be long before even modestly smart homes can promise real benefit to people with special needs, says Bonner.

He hopes a basic system controlling lights, heating and alarms should cost no more than £2,000 within a few years.

What gives this such impetus is that everyone can benefit, he says. "If you are laden with shopping, what a boon to be able to unlock and open the door regardless of whether you use a wheelchair or not."

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Film

Michael Turner

There is only one way to sum up Robert Redford's latest film as star and director, *The Horse Whisperer* – what a load of forelocks.



What a load of forelocks



"Much whispering and asserting of family values": Robert Redford, and Grace (Scarlet Johansson)

incing. Her lowest point comes when she returns to school, where she is made to climb stairs and is inexplicably rejected by her peers. Her mother's decision to take Grace and the horse to Redford for physical and spiritual rehabilitation is even less convincing.

Redford is fine as the whisperer, but the quasi-mystical attributes of the character are a

little syrupy, as is the romanticised portrayal of the life of modern day cowboys without so much as a cowpat in sight.

The film is less than subtle in its "back to basics" message: life in the country with traditional values and families is better than life in the big bad city.

There is a clear implication that Grace would not have had her accident and would have

recovered more swiftly if her mother had been a good old fashioned housewife instead of a high-powered editor.

After much whispering and asserting of family values, the horse is better, Grace's disability is all but cured (now that would have been a good trick) and her mother has learnt how to be a proper parent.

Television

Paul Darke

The most sensual woman to grace the small screen was Diana Rigg as Emma Peel in *The Avengers* (Granada Plus).



25 years on, the combination of sensuality and sophistication that is Emma Peel is still a thrill. Equally original is her male boss, the obese, wheelchair using, Rolls Royce owning "Mother" – a character whose name I inherited and a nickname, due to his wit and surreal nature, I am proud of.

The episode in which "Father" appears, we find "he" is a visually impaired woman. Nice touch.

Diana Rigg is still as sensual, witness *The Mrs Bradley Mysteries: Speedy Death* (BBC 1). But in this one-off drama the wheelchair user was just an excuse for a tale of late '20s bourgeois decadence. The murderess ended up being the wheelchair user – but she was faking her paralysis. Typical.

On the documentary side, disability was covered in two different ways last month. *Tomorrow's World* (BBC 1) had Jon Snow following Sue Leeming and her "disabling neck condition" as she prepared to have her neck broken by a surgeon in an attempt to save her life, while the first episode of *FAT* (ITV, continuing), followed Christie Martin's battle against obesity.

Tomorrow's World was simplistic, never questioning the supremacy of science to deal with all non-normal situations. *FAT*, on the other hand, was an excellent and sensitive examination of the realities of being obese, its social meaning, and the oppression of "fat" people by non-fat people and the medical profession. Congratulations ITV. Saturday is currently a feast day for disability: the new *See Hear on Saturday* (BBC 2), the old black-and-white cowboy series *Rawhide* (Channel 4), and the return of the light hearted American drama series *Early Edition* (ITV).

See Hear on Saturday now comes from my own haunt, the Light House in Wolverhampton. Judging from the first shows, it may take some time before its presenters develop a real rapport with the audience. *Rawhide*, which regularly uses disability, shows how political correctness is not new, while *Early Edition*, with a "blind" black woman as the hero's confidant, is pure entertainment.

Radio
Freaks,
Lies and
Celluloid

Who was this Radio 4 programme about the mis-representation of disabled people in films (25 August) aimed at?

There cannot be many disabled people who are unaware of how the cinema reinforces negative disability stereotypes. But even for an unaware, non-disabled audience, the case was made so often over 40 minutes that, surely, it amounted to overkill.

Thirty people took part, 14 of them disabled. I agree with their criticisms, and the defence by people like film director David

Lynch was appallingly weak.

However, it is not enough to say again and again that something is wrong and needs to be put right. Half an hour was spent complaining; only ten minutes was given to ways of improving matters.

One so-called solution was to take disabled people out of film making, which would not prevent film makers wanting to put disabled characters in films and probably doing it badly.

Allan Sutherland had the best answer: disabled people have to be creative enough to collaborate as equal partners with non-disabled film makers.

The programme was informative and entertaining. But if the objective listener came away with the impression that this was another case of disabled people complaining, I for one could understand.

Chris Davies



Stars in their eyes: Bonnie Tyler with disabled musicians (from left) Mark Rowland, Gerald West, Stephen Wade, Steve Knight, Dave Levett and Christopher Johnson celebrate 10 years of the Drake Music Project at a Queen's Hall, Edinburgh, concert in September.

TV festival
Viewers are
ahead of
programmers

Why are so few disabled people included in mainstream tv programmes?

The question was put to a panel of influential tv industry executives at the Guardian Edinburgh International Television Festival in August. They included Lorraine Heggessey, head of BBC children's programmes, Steve Hewlett, director of programmes at Carlton TV and Michael Attwell, controller of features and arts at Channel 5.

First they saw clips of screen tests, showing the potential of

nine disabled people such as Mat Fraser and Lisa Hammond to be mainstream presenters. It was refreshing to hear their frank and constructive comments.

Some panel members acknowledged that they had been ignorant of what disabled people could do and promised changes. The proof of this will be what happens on the tv screen.

Some issues should have had more time. There is an irritating glass ceiling which prevents talented and funny people with certain disabilities from being recognised beyond their impairment. Where is the line drawn? There should be no barrier.

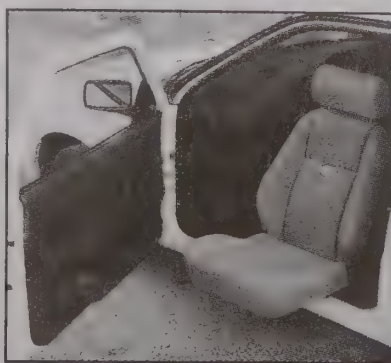
Speech impairment was raised, but the panel acknowledged that the tv viewing audience has moved on and so should the programming.

Over 100 people attended and the session was very enjoyable. It made people think.

Simon Minty

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Disability on the Festival fringe

Blue Skies

Many companies at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe find themselves hampered by the venues, usually a school gym or a church hall. Not so the Northern Theatre Company, who, with a simple stage setting, clever lighting, and a cast of only six, some of whom played more than one part, presented a thought-provoking one act play.

The theme of *Blue Skies* is a young man's struggle to come to terms with his sudden blindness, the result of a mugging incident.

Playwright Barry Wheatley, who has long experience of working with visually impaired people, shows a true perception of his subject. Any blind person or anyone who works with blind people must surely feel "Yes, I've been there".

John Newton, the main character, was an artist before the attack and we watch him go through all the necessary emotional stages in his struggle towards acceptance of disability and coping with it; the disbelief, despair, anger and



Coming to terms: John (Chris Gruca) with Blind Jack (Joe Grey)
BILL AYTON

frustration, and the grieving, are all there.

In Sam, the girlfriend, and Angela, the inexperienced young social worker, we see the other side – how they have to face their own feelings of rejection and inadequacy in their efforts to help.

Although the subject is serious and sensitive, there is humour, particularly for the blind people in the audience,

who were quick to recognise and respond to some all-too-familiar characters and situations.

This was an interesting and enjoyable production. Full marks too for the provision of good audio and Braille notes and for the touch tour of the set prior to curtain-up, all of which ensured that blind members of the audience could participate fully in the performance.

Jennifer Meiklejohn

Billycan

Common Ground Sign and Dance Theatre premiered *Billycan* at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

It is the tale of four travellers – a Nineteenth Century Welsh woman explorer, a space pioneer, a cola-swilling Native American Indian and an itinerant musician – who meet over a pile of stones and tell their stories and dreams.

The stories were expressed by dance and sign language. The few props (two large, empty drum cans, a film projector and a couple of musical instruments) were used imaginatively.

Each story-teller gave a splendid performance; the body language was very expressive. Whoever said it was "poetry in motion" was right.

My only criticism is that the stage lighting could have been better. It was difficult to see the sign language and mouth movements at times, especially if you were a deaf member of the audience in the back rows.

That aside, *Billycan* is well worth seeing.

Juliette K Jones



Mary Hughes shattered prejudices about Alzheimer's and old people's homes in *Ol Zimmer*.

SUMMIT STUDIOS

Three feet off the ground

Disabled since early childhood by arthritis, Nicola Wildin, a drama and media studies student from Glasgow University, explores her feelings as she struggles for acceptance as a person in her own right and for equal opportunities.

Through her experiences, she challenges non-disabled people to see her as more than an extra in the mainstream of life.

Clever interaction with the audience (who were blindfolded and led around), strengthened her thought-provoking point. A very talented performance.

Jennifer Meiklejohn



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Bringing The Community Together

Carers get cared for

Julie O’Keeffe checks out new equipment at the Independent Living show at Wembley

Companies are really trying to reduce wear and tear on carers by producing equipment that reduces or eliminates handling and lifting.

The most interesting device at the Independent Living show in September was the A.I.R. Pal, which transfers someone in a lying position to another surface, such as a bed.

Deflated, it looks like a single mattress. It is positioned by rolling the person from side to side as though a sling was being put on. Two restraint straps are very loosely secured across the person’s body and the A.I.R. Pal is inflated. Then, suspended on a bed of air, the person is slid or pushed from one surface to another. I found it very comfortable and secure. A draw sheet and bridge board are included and the blower unit is portable. £1,500 from Cane and Able, tel: (01202) 870189.

Standup/toileting hoists and dual action hoists were popular, but none of them were ground breaking. Companies showing new hoists included Smith and Nephew Homecraft, ESL and Talley Medical.

Still on caring for carers’ backs, Keep Able has a new powered bath lift, the Aquatec, which is battery powered and looks fairly standard. But it



Wheelchair athlete Rose Hill models the new Stannah power chair

reclines, and there are few others that do that. £649, tel: (01784) 440044.

Mangar’s Handy Pillowlift uses air to help someone move from lying down to sitting up. It also helps to turn a person from side to side. There is a pendant control on a lead that can be controlled by the user. The air compressor can be plugged into the mains or the Mangaroo battery power pack. £499, tel:

(01544) 267674.

I was interested in Aidserv’s compact hoist as they say it is the smallest on the market and can fit into a vertical wheelchair lift. This could enable someone to have just one hoist rather than having one upstairs and one down. The base looked small. £866.25 (plus VAT), tel: (01257) 425538.

The Stannah indoor power chair is different because the seat unit looks like a standard office chair. The control unit and joystick are on a retractable arm so that you can get close to desks. It is compact,

has a small turning circle, and a maximum speed of 2mph. From £2,500, tel: 0800-715 440.

The Carony wheelchair system enables a person in a power-chair to transfer into the passenger seat of a car without having to transfer out of their wheelchair, reducing effort and carer help. The wheelchair has a fully adjustable Recaro seat, and seats can be customised to include supports and restraints.

To transfer, you back the chair up to the car which has its door open, slide the wheelchair frame onto the one in the car and swivel the whole chair. The car door must be 760mm wide, 900mm floor to ceiling, and 850mm from rear of door to

cushion can be replaced with a gel pad if the user has a pressure sore. Cushion, £65. Pads, £25. Tel: (01675) 467933.

Charities were well represented at the show. The Clear Vision Project takes standard children’s picture books and adds Brailled text on invisible plastic sheets so the written text and pictures are still visible – an encouragement to integration. Books are lent free to families. Organisations pay a £40 subscription. Tel: 0181-789 9575.

The MS Society has updated its fact sheets and added *MS Research in Nutritional Science* and *Coping with Continence*, all informative and easy to



Do-it-yourself turning with Mangar’s Handy Pillowlift

RICHARD SINGLETON

dashboard. £7,500. Steering Developments, tel: (01442) 212918.

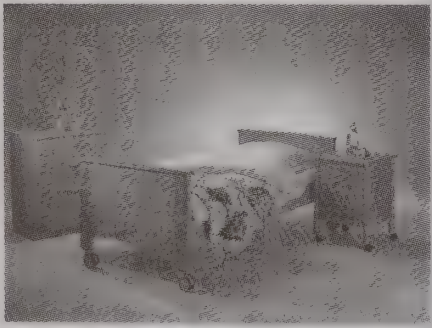
Talley Medical has introduced the Trinity range of wheelchair cushions, profiled or moulded in different densities of foam, which give different levels of pressure relief. A rectangular section in the middle of the

read. *Standards of Healthcare for People with MS*, for professionals, would be very useful for people with MS who find services vary from area to area. Free, tel: 0171-610 7171.

Julie O’Keeffe, Dip COT, SROT, is a freelance occupational therapist.

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Your stars

LIBRA (24 Sept-23 Oct)

You may have difficulty distinguishing your emotional life from your career this month. As there is some extra special attention coming from your dearest, you might do better to side with your emotions. Just make sure you keep things ticking over at work, and smile.

SCORPIO (24 Oct-22 Nov)

You could have problems selling your latest idea this month. You feel driven but you need a partner to help you steer. If you wait until later in the month that help will appear. Don't rush things.

SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov-21 Dec)

That little bit of trouble you went through in August will probably turn out to be a golden opportunity, if you seize it. You thought you were struggling with problems, but in fact there were new ideas for a better direction in amongst the turmoil. I hope you found them because now you can begin to build for the future.

CAPRICORN (22 Dec-20 Jan)

Your heart and your head may be in conflict during October. You may have to choose between career and home. Things will become clear towards the end of the month but, if in doubt, follow your heart.

AQUARIUS (21 Jan-19 Feb)

Just when you think you are overcoming obstacles and beginning to get a sure footing, a colleague is likely to put the boot in. The best thing you can do is to think of yourself, because others may be using you for their own ends and to the detriment of your friends and allies.

PISCES (20 Feb-20 March)

Fortune is still smiling on Pisceans in October, as Jupiter swings back into action in your sign. You can take advantage of a lucky break, but be ready for it – don't miss the boat. You might be a long time waiting for another opportunity like this one.

ARIES (21 Mar-20 Apr)

Opposition at the beginning of October gives way to feelings of tension by mid-month. Make sure that you are still in control of your own feelings, even if you feel others are in control of your actions. You will get a chance to move things forward if you play it cool rather than lose your rag.

TAURUS (21 Apr-21 May)

Your energy levels are high and positive in October. Be careful, however, that you avoid putting your foot in it when trying to persuade others to join your crusade. Be on firm ground before



By DN's
astrologer
Marion
Stanton

you involve too many other people in your plans.

GEMINI (22 May-22 June)

A course of action that seemed so correct at the start of the month could go disastrously wrong if you don't keep a careful eye on the project you are involved in. Don't leave any details to others. Try to steer what you have begun from start to finish.

CANCER (23 June-23 July)

If you played your cards right last month you should have set the wheels in motion for a positive project. Try to take a break, such as a late holiday. Otherwise, take it easy for a while because things will hot up and need your attention before you know it.

LEO (24 July-23 Aug)

Good ideas are flowing through you this month. Try to capture one or two before they spin-off. You just might have the inspiration to win yourself a much earned promotion, but it will be up to you to bring it to the attention of the right person.

VIRGO (24 Aug-23 Sept)

You have much energy and enthusiasm. With luck, you'll also have the backing of a committed partner. Now you could do with a little help from a like minded person to tip the balance in your favour. Listen to others as well as putting your own ideas first.

Trivia teasers

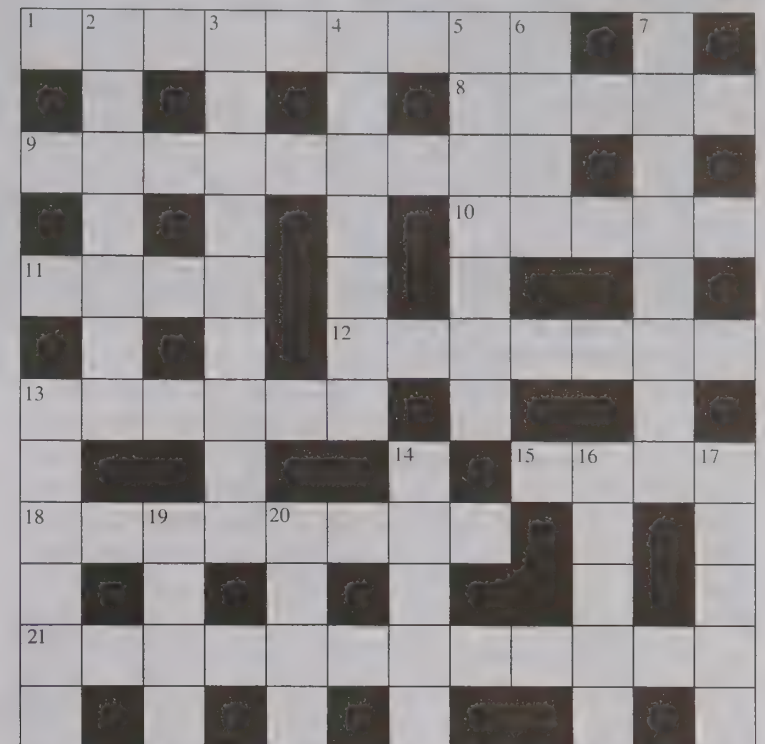
If you're one of those people who seem to know every Trivial Pursuit answer, see how you do with the following questions (answers on page 33):

- Who instigated the building of Westminster Abbey?
- In which year was legal aid introduced in the UK?
- What are Early Nantes, Long Red Surrey and Perfect Gem?
- On which classical work was the film *Kiss Me Kate* based?
- How many acres to a square mile?
- How many river Avons are there in England?
- Who was leader of the Peasant's Revolt?
- In computer terminology, what does RAM stand for?
- Which fictional detective first appeared in 1920 in *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*?
- What historic event took place at Runnymede?
- How many paintings did Van Gogh sell during his lifetime?
- What is the name of the locomotive of the Merioneth and Llanllyfylli Rail Traction Company Ltd?
- Who said: "Do not do unto others as you would that they should do unto you. Their tastes may not be the same"?
- Who was commander-in-chief of the Spanish Armada?
- What is the name for the point on the surface of the earth from which the shockwaves of an earthquake proceed?

DN's crossword

Answers on page 33

COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS



ACROSS

- 1,2 down. Accommodation with extra help (9,7)
- Boyfriend or girlfriend (5)
- Extremely comfortable and well-equipped (9)
- Number of seas, dials, sons, etc (5)
- Part of the face (4)
- Short fictional work (7)
- Shocked and horrified (6)
- Female horse (4)
- device for opening wheelchair accessible toilets (5,3)
- Burn a new sale (anag)

DOWN

- See 1 across
- US state (9)
- Ten dive (anag)
- Vile use (anag)
- Quality of medicine (4)
- Member of a Seventeenth Century Republican party (8)
- Roman entrance hall (6)
- Unit-counting machine (5)
- Type of brick (5)
- Go in (5)
- Quantity of whisky, perhaps (4)
- Type of flower (4)

Calling all readers!

DN is looking for people to contribute to this page. If you have any funny stories, clever puzzles, good (clean!) jokes, or anything else you think our readers might like to see, send them to Damien Vessey, address on page 2.



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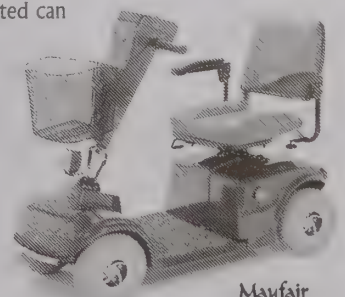
For advice and information on conversion and motability, contact David Vooght, G&M Coachwork, Teign Valley, Trusham, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ13 0NX
Tel: 01626 853050

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A UNIQUE SERVICE!

DN's telephone counsellor Lin Berwick can give disabled people and carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Disabled herself, Lin is a psycho-therapeutic counsellor, has a post-graduate diploma in homeopathic medicine and is a Methodist local preacher. Talk to her on (01787) 882111 on Thursday afternoons, 1-5pm and Mondays 6-10pm.



Can I earn from my hobby?

I was medically retired from my job ten years ago, aged 29, with a chronic back problem and am in receipt of Incapacity Benefit.

I keep myself busy with my hobby of wildfowl/decoy/fish carving in wood (*right*), which provides me with an absorbing and abiding release from my health problems and gives me a small measure of self-worth.

I am assured my work is of professional quality and I am keen to offer it and my teaching abilities for sale. I am worried about how earnings could affect my benefit, but I believe I may be able to claim therapeutic earnings allowance.

Please could you advise me on this and have you suggestions on how I could market my teaching and carving skills?

Robert, Bristol

Thank you so much for sending me photographs of some of your carvings. They are beautiful and clearly of a professional standard.

You should be able to earn money from "therapeutic" work without affecting your Incapacity Benefit, providing

this is done on the advice of a doctor and with the agreement of the Social Security Department.

The amount of work you can do under these arrangements is normally limited to 16 hours a week and your gross earnings must not be more than £48.



Ducking into a new career

Before taking any steps, I suggest you seek advice from your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, taking with you your benefit details.

Regarding teaching, have you considered contacting Bristol University or any local adult education colleges?

As for selling your carvings, you could try local shops and galleries. You could also contact the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust which has a shop, and a magazine *Wild Bird*. The Trust may welcome

your carvings if you offer them on a shared profit venture.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has a very good catalogue. There is also the Wildlife Artists Netlink Directory website at www.artslink.com. If you do not have direct access to the Internet, your local library will help. You could also seek advice from a professional wood carver; try your Yellow Pages.

Will Viagra help?

I am registered blind and since 1980 have been taking Sustanon injections for problems with my pituitary gland, lack of hair and impotence problems.

Even though the weekly injections seem to work, they do have side-effects of tiredness, excessive sweating and wanting sex more often, even though I do not get a 100 per cent erection.

My doctor said that if Viagra tablets became available on prescription he would refer me to a consultant to advise on their suitability for me.

Please could you detail what Viagra will do, what it can solve for me, how often I may

have to take it, and the side effects (my doctor has said it may cause heart disease). He doesn't seem to know much about the drug.

Naturally, I am very excited about something that may cure my problems.

Mr X, Peterborough

It would be wonderful if Viagra, the little, blue, magic bullet, lives up to its hype in the newspapers. It is said doctors have written almost two million prescriptions since its launch in April. I understand it is likely to be licensed in the UK for prescription before the end of the year.

Viagra is not suitable for every man with erectile problems. Each person will have to be assessed individually to take into account their medical and sexual history and to see if they may be prone to particular or dangerous side-effects.

Information will be sent to doctors, so it is not surprising that no one has the full facts yet.

I am sure the Impotence Association or the Health Information Service will be able to provide information when

this becomes available.

Let's be partners

Can I through your column make a plea for more partnership between disabled and non-disabled people?

It seems to me that to limit the management of disability organisations to disabled people is unhelpful. There is a practical objection – that there may not be enough disabled people with the requisite skills on which the organisation can draw. But even if this is not the case, there is a danger that any group limited to disabled people may become unrealistically subjective in its aims.

What is worse is the possibility than non-disabled people with a valuable contribution to make will feel excluded and unwanted and may withdraw goodwill.

I believe it is right that disabled people should take control of organisations which work for the benefit of disabled people, but it can be taken to extremes. Some organisations build in a requirement that at least 51 per cent of the management committee should be people with a disability. That seems to me fair enough and far enough.

Can I also have a moan about discrimination. I was brought up to believe that a wise person discriminates in all things. What is unacceptable is unreasonable discrimination, such as job adverts which say that only disabled people need apply, or government departments which waive the normal entry test.

Charles, Dorset

I wonder how many readers will agree with you that some disabled people may have gone to extremes. Does it matter that non-disabled people may feel unwanted and excluded? One thing is certain: it's good to discuss these issues, and this column provides the opportunity to do so.

Health Information Service, 9am-5pm, tel: 0800-665 544. Impotence Helpline, tel: 0181-767 7791.

Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, tel: (01453) 890333.

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, tel: (01767) 680551.

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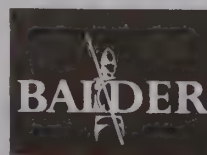
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Hooked!

Fishing has given a new lease of life to Mike Wells, Rod Hermeston finds

Standing by the river, listening to nature, and casting his hooks, Mike Wells feels great.

It is a sensation which he thought he had lost for good.

Four years ago his life changed dramatically when he became blind, then lost both kidneys a week later.

The loss of his sight and the need for dialysis four times a week led him to give up his great passion, fishing. It was a heavy blow for Mike, who had been in 30 mainstream national angling championships. But earlier this year he took up the rod again and won first prize in the National Angling Championship for the Disabled, run by the National Federation of Anglers (NFA).

Mike, 54, of Buckinghamshire has had to make a few changes to his technique and has to fit fishing days round the routine of dialysis.

He says: "I have a friend to tell me where to aim when I cast the hook. I reel the fish in but somebody else has to land it for me in the net."

"While it is not like it used to be, when I could see everything and do everything for myself, it is still an immense pleasure because I never thought I would fish again.

"I can still enjoy the river bank. You feel the warm breeze and you hear the swans and the ducks. You also hear the fish plopping and know where they are. Perhaps it is even more enjoyable for me now that I am blind because I am more alert to them. Now I intend to fish until the day I die."

And the thrill of success is something he loves.

"I'd fished for 30 years in national competitions but never won. This has put me on top of the world," he says.

He hopes to compete in the first world championships for disabled anglers in Belgium next year.

It is a sport which a lot of disabled people take part in, says Alan Bates, who is chair of the NFA committee for anglers with disabilities. "A lot of people can fish without adaptations. There are very few that can be bought. We can advise people on the best ways for them to go about fishing."

So if you are at a loose end, why not cast about for some fishing fun? You might get hooked like Mike.

The NFA can give advice on the best way for disabled people to fish. Tel: (01283) 734735.

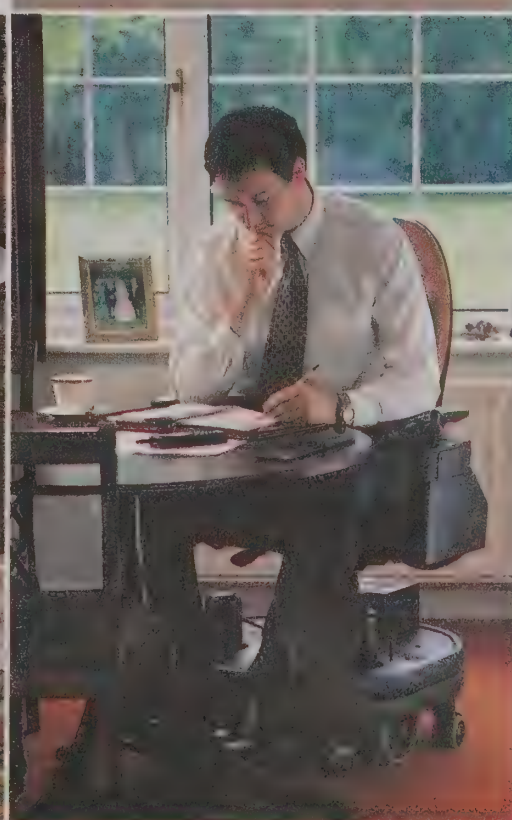
Mel Wilde Products supplies a frame as part of its Octoplus range, which can attach to a wheelchair and hold many fishing tools within easy reach. Tel: (01942) 243443.



Reel good fun: Mike (right) has a sense of freedom after taking up fishing again

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Don't ignore Norfolk



Work that body: Keep kit at the Vauxhall Centre, Norwich

Lisa Hitchen and Akeem Olaseinde checked out the city of Norwich

We thought this medieval city would be flat being in the middle of East Anglia, but not so. It was heavy going for both wheelchair user and pusher, and that was on the short stretch between the 900-year-old cathedral and the Castle

Mall Shopping Centre.

Taxis proved to be our favourite mode of transport for the rest of the day, though we did manage to get one wheelchair accessible bus with a manual ramp.

Since July, Eastern Counties Bus Company has provided ten buses with manual or automatic ramps along the Norwich Western Corridor between Bowthorpe and the city centre.

The Norfolk Coalition of Disabled People (NCODP) take some of the credit for the buses. It used direct action and intelligent argument to lobby the bus company for accessible transport.

But the NCODP is not happy with the manual ramps because drivers have to leave their seats to put out the ramps.

Bus drivers' attitudes are another cause for complaint. We experienced this ourselves when deciding to get off the bus at an earlier stop. "You should have told me before," the driver grumbled, "I would have parked closer to the kerb."

The NCODP is campaigning for disability awareness training for bus drivers and for accessible buses on other routes.

Its efforts don't end there. In March it appointed its first Direct Payments (DP) Co-ordinator, Keith Roads. Under this scheme people who use community care services can get cash payments to buy their own care services.

Mr Roads is running the first pilot DP scheme in Norfolk. He is currently going through the transfer from agency care to the DP process himself. He told DN: "Many disabled people are becoming disenchanted with agency

care. They cannot control the times they get up or go to bed. I am not the archetypal



Keith Roads of the NCODP

successful example myself but I can empathise with peoples' concerns when employing their own carers for the first time."

Mr Roads's work has included organising information

part in the leaflet scheme.

The festival is likely to lead to more traffic in the city centre. Congestion is another area the council is looking at with its review of on-street parking, as part of the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy.

Disabled people won't escape its effects if proposals to scrap the city's Green Badge scheme go ahead. The scheme is favoured by locals because it cuts out Orange Badge abuse, though is unpopular with tourists.

Stephanie Ash said: "The council is consulting with us on this but I am still not confident that the criteria for issuing orange badges is strict enough."

Further upheavals include the Riverside and King Street developments over the next five years. These will bring major changes to the railway station, a multi-storey car park and plans for a new leisure centre, a supermarket and a



We're getting there: Akeem on board a wheelchair accessible bus

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sessions on DP across the county and talking about the scheme on radio.

He said: "The mechanics of the process is slow due to the lack of social workers. The pilot scheme will finish next October. The findings will then go back to the social services committee, but I am confident DP in Norfolk will continue after the pilot finishes."

The NCODP grew out of another proactive group, the Norwich Access Group (NAG). Its new chairwoman, Stephanie Ash has her sights set on ensuring that this month's Norfolk and Norwich Festival is as accessible as possible.

She has spent the last four months checking out some 25 of the city's major arts venues. NAG and the city council are now producing free leaflets about access at each one.

The long term aims are clear. Ms Ash said: "If people can see in black-and-white how feeble their facilities are then perhaps they will make improvements."

The council also subsidised disability equality training last month for each venue taking

swimming pool.

NAG is lobbying for a satellite Shopmobility scheme in the car park and has already secured the space. The plan is to give wheelchair users the chance to hire a chair or scooter straight off the trains, then visit the river or the city centre.

Gregg Pearson, chairman of the Vauxhall Centre Disabled



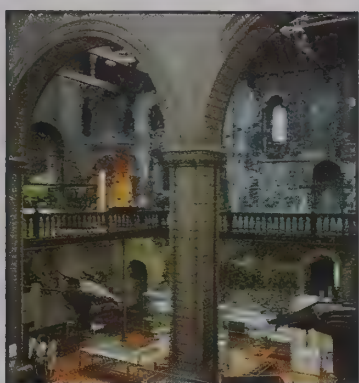
Ann Young, disability officer

Members' Committee, and fellow member Jacqueline Gittens are determined that users at the day centre set the agenda when they come.

Mr Pearson said: "My theory is that the computer is the basket-weaving of the 1990s." The committee doesn't dictate that people learn business skills: people come to the



Norwich Cathedral and Castle: Multi-million pound development schemes will improve access at both tourist attractions



The Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts on the University of East Anglia campus, tel: (01603) 593199 celebrates its twentieth anniversary this year with a "Twenty of the Best" exhibition and two Henry Moore exhibitions. The centre is accessible for wheelchair users.

The Theatre Royal, tel: (01603) 623562 offers a mixture of the comic and the classic with Jasper Carrott and Dylan Moran visiting Norwich for the Festival and Robert Lindsay as Richard III from 13-17 October. The theatre has disabled access, talking notes, an induction loop and some performances are signed.

Float out of town to the Broads with Broadland Cruises, tel: (01603) 624051 from Elm Hill which has level access. One of its boats, the City of Norwich has a wheelchair lift but call in advance to check availability.

Accommodation

Few hotels in Norwich are accessible as a call to the Holiday Care Service, tel: (01293) 774535 will tell you. Norwich Area Tourism Agency, tel: (01603) 662661 produce a guide with disability symbols.

The Quality Friendly Hotel, tel: (01603) 741161 (*see Special*



The Youth Hostel, Norwich

The low-down on Norwich

Getting there

The M11 and A11 takes you to Norwich from London, the A14 or the A47 from the North. Norwich station (Anglia Railways, tel: (01473) 693333), has level access, disabled toilets, portable ramps, a minicom service, tel: (01603) 630748 and an induction loop for deaf and hard of hearing customers.

Car Link, tel: (01603) 616040, offers a door-to-door service. Call three working days in advance. Accessible taxis are provided by Tolver Taxis, tel: (01603) 222209 and Express Taxis, tel: (01603) 767626. For community transport minibuses, contact Door to Door, tel: (01603) 466669.

Entertainment

This month over 140 events are taking place around the city and beyond as part of the Norfolk and Norwich Festival from 7-18 October, tel: (01603) 764764.

centre to learn what they want.

The committee has set up a scheme of peer tutoring. Ms Gittens said: "Some of our members are learning new skills at college. They bring them back to the centre and teach others."

The pair had high praise for centre manager, Michael Rooney, whose aim is that members should eventually run the place themselves with social services taking a back seat.

Ann Young, disability officer for Norwich city council, is the only member of her department – Leisure and Community Services – with a part-time post. Even that looks uncertain with ongoing council re-organisation.

She remains optimistic though. "Even if my job wasn't there, I still think the council will have a policy which will deal with issues of disability, race and gender. We have the Disability Discrimination Act on our side and the council has done a lot of work to ensure disabled people can gain access to our services."

Ms Young wants to make integrated playschemes across the city more inclusive. She said: "An accessible toilet and a ramp is not enough. Disabled children need to know they will be treated the same as non-disabled children and parents need to be reassured that their kids won't be in any danger."

Neil Howard, chairman of the Norfolk Disability Sports Forum (NDSF), and an athlete himself, is another Norfolk man busy empowering disabled people. He is using the local media to get the message across with a weekly sports column for the *Eastern Daily Press*.

He said: "Not all disabled people are confident enough to go into an integrated sporting environment. NDSF exists to inform people how they can take part in both segregated and mainstream sports."

Three wheelchair basketball teams in Kings Lynn and Norwich have been set up through NDSF. Mr Howard said: "Following our sports day in August, three teams have secured lottery funding to buy sports wheelchairs."

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There's Moore: the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts on the University of East Anglia campus is fully accessible

offers, pg39) a 15-minute drive from the city centre, has three accessible twin rooms with ensuite facilities though the baths have no hoists, from £40 per night per person.

The Beeches Hotel, tel: (01603) 621167 is a five minute walk from the centre. One double room is accessible and has an ensuite bathroom, from £59 bed and breakfast.

The Hotel Norwich, tel: (01603) 787260 has one double and one twin for wheelchair users with ensuite bathrooms from £75 for a single room.

The Youth Hostel, tel: (01603) 627647 has one accessible room

for a disabled person and a carer. Level access to main areas. £8.80 per night, Youth Hostel Association members.

Norwich City Council, tel: (01603) 622233 sells maps and guides on the city and the county of Norfolk.

Shopping

The Castle Mall Shopping Centre below Norwich Castle was designed with the help of local disability groups and most of its 80 shops are accessible. Disabled parking is pay and display and is located right next to the Shopmobility, tel: (01603) 766430.

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Bright ideas



If, like me, your main computer talent is accidentally drenching your keyboard in coffee, maybe you should look at a new gismo from Electroustic, their Smart Flexi1 (below) and Flexi2 keyboards. They plug directly into a PC (nobody loves a poor Mac user!) without the need for further hardware or software, and are Windows '95 compatible. The good part is that you can throw almost any liquid at it and sparks won't fly. You can

also roll it up and transfer it to a different computer. If this has you all keyed up, contact Electroustic, tel: (01264) 333664.

Do you sometimes need to move the furniture at home, but don't have the strength of King Kong to do so? Glisdome's Magic Gliders (top right) may well be the help you need. The Gliders are Teflon coated discs which come in seven different



Dan Batten highlights more useful products



sizes. With the help of a Lifter to raise any heavy furniture, they slide underneath and allow you to glide heavy objects about without rupturing anything vital. Contact Annie Kitcherside of ASK Associates, tel: (01784) 423313.

Aquashield (left) is a watertight cover which allows any limb, which is not a particular fan of the wet stuff, to be protected from it. If you enjoy water based sports, but are injured, this cover will allow you to continue whilst keeping any affected limb dry. The covers have been used by Newcastle United Football Club and even Chris Tarrant. Put the splash back into your life and call Aquashield UK, tel: (01344) 876590.

Do your feet constantly feel like slabs of ice, even with granny's knitted socks on? Then Scholl's Therm-ic Footwarmer system (right) maybe able to thaw your frozen paws. The footwarmers are inserted into your shoes, and, using a small battery pack which can be recharged up to 1,000 times, gently generate



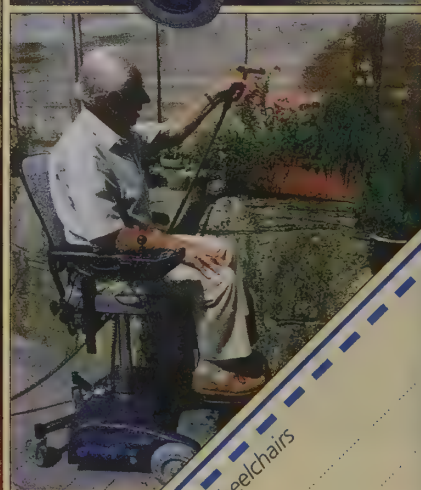
heat within your shoes. They can be trimmed to fit any shoes, or you can order a custom made pair if required. Contact Active Enterprises, tel: (01438) 832056. Then hot foot it to the shops and buy some.

• If you have any inventions or useful tips you think other readers would be interested to know about, send them with a colour photograph to Dan Batten, DN, address on page 3, or tel: 0171-619 7323.



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DORSET BH23 1BR

Please send me details of the Euroflex range of wheelchairs

Name.....
Address.....
Daytime Tel. No.
Post Code.....

DN1098

Information



The Royal National Institute for the Blind has recently launched a new holiday service for blind and partially sighted people, their families and carers. They now offer a four night mid-week break at Lakeside Village, Hayling Island, Hampshire, starting 21 September. Tel: 0171-388 1266 and ask for the Holiday Service.



Scope, the UK's biggest disability charity, has produced its Christmas 1998 catalogue, full of great ideas for presents, and many other practical items like crackers, cards and wrapping paper. All profits go directly to support the work of Scope. For a copy contact Teresa Todd, Scope, 4th Floor, 22-26 Dingwall Road, Croydon CR0 9XF.

Shepway Access and Disabled Association has merged with The Wheelchair Users' Group. All matters concerning access and provision of facilities in the Shepway area will now be dealt with by The Wheelchair Users' Group, 20 Cheriton Gardens, Folkestone, Kent, tel: (01303) 226464. Social activities have been taken over by the new Shepway Disabled Friendship Club, tel: (01303) 277946 or (01303) 260352.



The West of England Centre for Integrated Living (WECIL) has published the *Personal Assistant Employer's Handbook*, for disabled people managing their own self-operated personal assistance scheme. Topics include self-assessment, managing staff, tax, insurance and employment law. Formats available: A4 wire-bound, audio tape and computer disk. £10 (plus £3.50 p&p) to disabled people and organisations, £20 (plus £3.50 p&p) to others. Cheques payable to "ILSA (Wecil Ltd)". WECIL, Leinster Avenue, Knowle, Bristol BS4 1AR, tel: 0117-983 9839 (with minicom).

The Vocational Assessment Centre, Kent is available to all disabled service and ex-service men and women to help them with career guidance. Clients get a three day assessment which includes access to computer databases for training and jobs, and cv preparation. Post-assessment help and advice can also be sent by fax or post. Contact: Patricia Wheeler, The Royal British

Legion Industries, The Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NL, tel: (01622) 717202, fax: (01622) 882195, or look at <http://www.rbli.co.uk>.

The Migraine Trust

The Migraine Trust has a new booklet on complementary therapies for migraine which covers a range of treatments, research evidence, predicting who will benefit, local practitioners and further information. For your free copy, write to the Trust at 45 Great Ormond Street, London WC1N 3HZ, tel: 0171-831 4818.



Reforesting Scotland has produced a video entitled *Woods For All - Trees for People with a Disability*. It includes path access, guided walks and site planning. It lasts 20 minutes and each video has a subtitled version. £10 (inc. p&p, cheques payable to Woods for All), write to Woods for All, Reforesting Scotland, 21a Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7AF.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

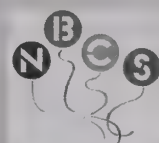
ACROSS: 1. Sheltered
8. Lover 9. Luxurious
10. Seven 11. Lips 12. Novella
13. Aghast 15. Mare 18.
Radar key 21. Unanswerable
DOWN: 2. Housing
3. Louisiana 4. Evident
5. Elusive 6. Dose 7. Leveller
13. Atrium 14. Meter 16. Adobe
17. Enter 19. Dram 20. Rose

What's on

Deaf Awareness Week in Camden, 12-18 October. Camden Arts and Tourism is building on this by planning a conference for January 1999, looking at deaf awareness and culture and extending audiences within the deaf community. Further details, tel: 0171-911 1681, fax: 0171-911 1615.



The National Care Homes Association's annual conference and exhibition, *Who really Cares?*, London, 22-23 October. It will look at the white paper due to be published during the autumn, and changes to employment law such as the national minimum wage. Contact the Association at 4th Floor, 45-49 Leather Lane, London EC1N 7TJ, tel: 0171-831 7090, fax: 0171-831 7040.



The National Blind Childrens Society (NBCS), Education and Information Day, 24 October, Cardiff, 10am-4.30pm, for the parents and carers of visually impaired children. Talks, debates, question and answer sessions, and an exhibition of equipment, services and organisations. Contact Jean Howells at NBCS, Natwest Chambers, Victoria Street, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset TA8 1AN, tel: (01453) 751194, Fax: (01278) 792929.

The British Society for Music Therapy, one day conference, Nordoff-Robins Music Therapy Centre, London, 24 October. Presentations will include *The Music, the Meaning and the Therapist's Dilemma* and *The Changing Faces Within* (changes observed and experienced within a therapeutic relationship). For details contact BSMT Administrator, 25 Rosslyn Avenue, East Barnet, Herts EN4 8DH, tel/fax: 0181-368 8879.

The Scope national conference/exhibition, *Welfare Reform - the Equality Debate: Moving the Agenda Forward*, 5-7 November, London, looking at Government welfare reform and the inclusion of disabled people in their new welfare contract. For booking form, or details, tel: 0171-619 7373, e-mail: conference@scope.org.uk.

The National Disability Martial Arts Tour will be at the Mike Heaffey Centre, Stanmore, 26 November, the 5th Festival for South of England, 13 May 1999 and Loughborough, 16 June 1999. An opportunity for all to try a range of martial arts and join clubs. For Stanmore contact Barry Mitchell, tel: 0181-909 3759, e-mail: terry.taylor@dial.pipex.com, or for information on them all write to Terry Taylor, 6 Bulldog Road, Lordswood, Catham, Kent ME5 8SJ, tel: (01634) 201469.

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Edward the Confessor
2. 1949 3. Carrots
4. *The Taming of the Shrew* (Shakespeare) 5. 640
6. Three (Upper, Lower and East) 7. Wat Tyler
8. Random Access Memory
9. Hercule Poirot
10. The Magna Carta was signed 11. One (The Red Vineyard, sold to Belgian artist Anna Boch)
12. Ivor the Engine
13. George Bernard Shaw
14. The Duke of Medina Sidonia 15. The epicentre

Video top five

1. **GOOD WILL HUNTING** (Buena Vista): Acclaimed film about a genius street kid.
2. **DEVIL'S ADVOCATE** (Warner): Pacino in Faustian melodrama with great effects.
3. **THE JACKAL** (CIC): Richard Gere in top action with Bruce in action gripper.
4. **DOUBLE TEAM** (Columbia Tristar): Yet another Van Damme grand slam.
5. **THE EDGE** (Fox Pathé): Hopkins and Baldwin fall out after plane crash.

Chart supplied by MIRB.

Closed captions-video includes pre-recorded word-for-word captions

DN is on the web. Visit our site at <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk> or you can e-mail us with ideas on editor@disabilitynow.org.uk



A FIRST FOR BRITAIN!

50 stones down to 5 stones carrying capacity.

THE ALDERSLEY EXCEL

Fully tested at Blackpool Wheelchair Evaluation Centre.



ALDERSLEY POWERCHAIRS

aren't just for cheeky youngsters! They are also made for slightly more sophisticated adults too - up to 50 stones carrying capacity if required!

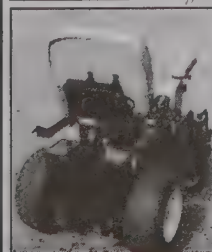
ALL CHAIRS HAVE SUSPENSION FOR COMFORT AND CAN BE CUSTOMISED TO SUIT THE INDIVIDUAL CLIENT.

Only available direct from:



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Coseley, West Midlands WV14 8HB

For further details and/or free assessment
Tel: 0121 520 6942
Fax: 0121 522 4833



Please send details of Excel Range DN10/98

Name.....

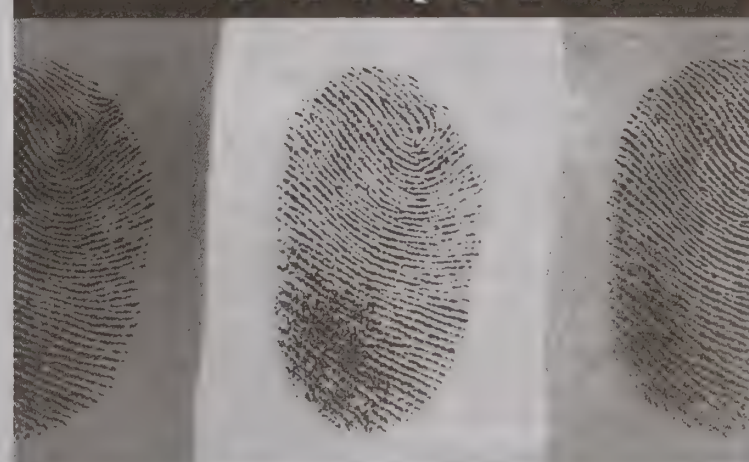
Address.....

Post Code.....

Tel.....

The weight of the person interested is.....stones or.....kgs!

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If you would like to sell something on this page please fill out the classified advert form on the opposite page

Personal

SOLVENT MALE, N/S, own home and car. Interests are music, cooking, cinema. Wheelchair user. Seeks female, 30-40, 5ft tall. TLC and security offered in exchange for same. Box No. 283

BRIGHT, HAPPY, SECURE male graduate, 30s. Tallish, attractive, slim. Likes animals, music and alternative therapies. Slightly disabled. Longs to find mobile(-ish) soul-mate, 25-42, to make life complete. Petite and feminine, happy and enthusiastic lady would be ideal. Box No. 284

ATTRACTIVE, ARTICULATE GUY, 26, into many things including music, books, the outdoors and nature. I'm always open to new ideas. I have a gsoh and seek female companionship to enjoy various things together. I wltm a female for friendship or relationship. I'm based in Scotland and can travel easily. All letters answered. Box No. 285

MELVIN CRUTCHLEY WOULD like to hear from male hemiplegiacs aged 20-35 who play football. I am keen to start a team and am keen to learn more. Please write to me at Box No. 286

GAY, MALE PARAPLEGIC, keen on all aspects of motorcycling and quad-bike riding for disabled people, seeks others interested. Box No. 287

COULD BE A GREAT catch for a caring, fun loving lady! Me - very independent, wheelchair using, early 30s, professional male with kind, caring soul and gsoh. Own home and car. Interests include travel, music, cinema, socialising and enjoying life to the full. If you are a lady, aged 25+, who wants to be loved, cherished and be treated as an equal, then drop me a line as I may be able to offer you the life you seek. Midlands/anywhere. Box No. 288

INDEPENDENT MALE FROM East Lancashire, aged 23. I have a slight neurological disability. I wltm a nice female who also has a slight disability or able bodied for friendship and romance. I will reply to all. Box No. 289

MY NAME IS Stephen. I'm 47 years old, blind, with slight cp and a gsoh. I wltm

bi-females for longterm friendship and possible relationship. I've led a varied life and have many interests, but haven't found Ms/Miss Right yet. If possible please reply on cassette. Manchester or reasonable travelling distance. Box No. 290

I AM A 49 year old man. I wltm a lady for friendship and fun. Why not take a chance and write to me. London/Home Counties. Box No. 291

LADY, WHEELCHAIR USER, seeks a disabled or non-disabled, kind man with similar interests, for penpal or friendship (maybe more), caring and sharing. Please write a letter, enclosing a photo if you want. Box No. 292

HI THERE GIRLS, I'm a disabled man in my 20s, and am sick of watching able-bodied friends having and enjoying sex, and taking it for granted. I want a sex life too before I am 99 years old. What's wrong with enjoying life? Box No. 293

FAMILY WITH SPECIAL needs children seek other families with the same to exchange letters etc for contact. Children are aged 11, 9, 4 and 3. We are in the Birmingham area. All letters will be answered. Box No. 294

MY NAME IS Michael. I'm a Christian astrologer (not professional). I suffer from a rare type of dyslexia. I am long-term unemployed, but have my own house. My interests are history, old-time dancing, the piano, taking newspaper cuttings and steam engines. I am a young looking 48 and wltm a lady, perhaps a good deal younger. I am 6ft tall and slim. I live near Bishop's Stortford. Box No. 295

MY NAME IS Ian. I am divorced, 39 and lonely. I would like to make friends and meet someone special. I like music, animals. I don't drink or smoke. Box No. 296

FEMALE, 23, WHEELCHAIR user likes football and pubs. Seeks man, 20-30, n/s, with sense of humour, able-bodied/disabled, for friendship, possibly more. Photo appreciated. Box No. 297

FEMALE, 40, ABLE-BODIED with 5 year old. Likes music, cinema, eating out. Seeks male, 40-60, for friendship, possible relationship. Disabled or not. Photo appreciated. Box No. 298

For sale

SUNRISE STERLING 4 scooter. As new, £950. Tel: (01920) 871639.

DATSUN BLUEBIRD 1.8, auto, '88. 54k miles, new MOT, excellent condition. Nine function remote signal system to suit right hand control driver. £1,750 ono. Tel: (01784) 245351.

PRIDE JAZZY 1120 electric powerchair. Modern looking, new condition, purchased in May '98. Price new £2,495. Can deliver and demonstrate. £1,950 ono. Tel: (01162) 841941.

FORD ESCORT CHAIRMAN, 1300cc, L reg, metallic burgundy, recent MOT. Seats 3 people and wheelchair, fsh. 11k miles from new. £8,750. Tel: (01895) 435957.

BEC SCORPIO ELECTRIC wheelchair with kerb climber. Never used. Cost £3,700, accept £2,000 ono. Tel: (01482) 789421.

FIAT FIORINO 1.4, P reg, 1,600 miles. Four seats, wheelchair conversion with ramp, electric winch. £9,500 ono. Tel: (01530) 415416 (Leicestershire).

PACESAVER 3-WHEEL SCOOTER. Folds to fit car boot. Red, good order. Bargain, only £950. Tel: 0181-426 1710.

CHILD'S TRIKE WITH accessories. Suitable for 2-5 years, vgc. As new, colour plum. £300. Tel: (01909) 478239.

NISSAN CHAIRMAN SERENA Cargo, 2.3 SLX diesel. Metallic blue, 1996, N reg, 9k miles, pristine. Takes 2 wheelchairs, electric remote controlled lift. £11,000 ono. Tel: (01756) 792323 (Skipton).

ELAP ROTATING CAR seat. £200 ono. Tel: (01772) 431371.

METRO, 1.3, AUTO, H reg. Rear ramp and raised roof for wheelchair access (Poynting). £4,000 ono. Tel: (01179) 792988 (7-9pm or weekends, Bristol).

FORD ESCORT AUTOMATIC. Constables carchair for passenger (powerlift and wheelchair). 1.6L, F reg, 12 months test, taxed, 46k miles, vgc. £2,250 ono. Tel: (01924) 363633 (West Yorks).

CARTER CRUISER 2E electric wheelchair. Six years old but vgc. Folding back, kerb climbers, charger. £2,340 new, best offer accepted. Tel: 0181-656 4454.

QUICKIE REVOLUTION LIGHTWEIGHT wheelchair, 20in, little used. £800. Tel: (01706) 817518 (West Yorks).

HNE EXPLORER POWERED wheelchair. 2.5 years old, hardly used, excellent condition. £1,200 ono. Tel: (01536) 723426.

SINGLE ADJUSTAMATIC BED with massage facility, recently serviced. £450. Tel: (01268) 490401.

ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR FOR sale. One year old. Cost £2,600, accept £1,300 ono. Tel: 0181-578 2086.

DYNAVox COMPUTER WITH software and manuals. Ideal for young disabled person. Hardly used, offers in the region of £2,000 please. Tel: 0181-289 2055.

ELAP SWIVEL SEAT to fit Vauxhall Astra. Excellent condition, £200 ono. Tel: (01698) 854957 (Glasgow).

RENAULT 1.4i EXTRA. Reg 7/7/95. Jubilee conversion, white, 12k miles. Two forward facing rear seats, winch, lowered floor, double folding ramp. Excellent condition. £7,000. Tel: (01246) 851263 (Chesterfield).

LARK 6, 4-WHEEL scooter, 21 months old, shopping bag, charger and weather shield. Offers please. Tel: (01723) 582468.

ELECTRICALLY OPERATED BED, brand new "Country recliner" (model SFP/S90). Head/tail lift. £600, offers invited. Tel: (01823) 334910 (Taunton).

BURVILL CAR-TOP hoist in working order, may need adaptor for roof rack. £300. Tel: 0171-794 3475.

HUNTLEIGH HYKA INDOOR/outdoor powerchair, vgc. Includes batteries and charger. £1,200. Tel: (01264) 790556.

SUNGIFT 300 SCOOTER, vgc, new cell batteries, new charger and off-vehicle charging harness. £1,000 ono. Tel: (01865) 460659.

AMPTRAMP SCOOTER, GOOD condition. £1,100 ono. Tel: (01159) 227317.

BEC STERLING 3-WHEEL scooter, bought March 1998, never used. £1,000 ono. Tel: (01932) 781559 (Sunbury).

WHEELCHAIR ACTION 2000 LT. Vgc, 1 year old. £350. Call Colin, tel: 0181-567 2189.

ELECTRIC MULTI-POSITION bed. Good condition, £400. Electric armchair with recline and lift. Good condition, £425. Can arrange delivery. Tel: (01689) 829186.

VW MICROBUS 1600. Turbo, D reg, 98k miles. Seat 6 including wheelchair. Two sunroofs, tracks, ramps, clamps, 2 sliding doors, MOT until August 1999. £4,500 ono. Tel: (01760) 723180 (Norfolk).

ELECTRIC ADJUSTABLE BED. Three foot, with vibrator sprung base. Bargain at £400. Tel: 0181-959 7031 (northwest London).

RENAULT EXTRA, ATLAS conversion. Dropping rear suspension and fold-out ramp. Seats 4 plus wheelchair. Exceptional condition. Fsh, F reg, 30k miles. £3,950. Tel: (01324) 714354 (Scotland).

SPA CONTROLLER CHAIR. Small, fully adjustable - recline, height, seat, length and width. Covered in rust coloured spate fabric. Suit child. Unused, £395. Tel: 0121-744 6087 (West Midlands).

VAUXHALL ASTRA VAN. D reg, 1987, 1.3 auto. Converted for disabled passenger via rear doors. MOT until March 1999. Only 35k miles. Fair condition, serviced regularly. £2,200 ono. Tel: 0171-263 2141.

GEBERITT "WASH & DRY" toilet. Three months use. Cost £1,965 new, now £1,000 ono. Contact Lin Berwick, tel: (01787) 882111 or fax: (01787) 882112.

NISSAN VERSA VANETTE diesel, J reg. Will have 12 months MOT. 46k miles, electric lift, alarmed. Wheelchair restraints/safety harness. New vehicle forces sale. £6,700 ono. Tel: 0121-246 9941 (Birmingham).

FORD ESCORT CHAIRMAN, diesel, J reg. 1992, only 16,050 miles, wireless cassette. Electric rear suspension to lower car for easy access. Four seater plus wheelchair. Also front passenger seat swings out for easier access. Excellent condition. £7,500. Tel: (01207) 230978.

TOBY CHURCHILL LIGHTWRITER speech aid. Almost new, keyboard, Dectalk, battery charger, carrying case. £2,000. Tel: (01792) 203390.

STIRLING MIDI SR scooter. Less than 20 miles use. As new, with charger and manual. £1,200. Tel: (01442) 381155 (west Herts).

CHEETAH INDOOR/OUTDOOR powerchair. 15in, little use, in vgc, lights, winkers. £590. Tel: (01722) 322938.

FORD ESCORT ESTATE. F reg, excellent condition, automatic clutch. Electric hoist for transferring person to car. 26k miles. £4,000. Also complete wheelchair powerpack, £150. Tel: (01736) 796524.

FORD ESCORT CHAIRMAN, C reg. Rear access ramps plus hydraulic lowering suspension. Seats 3 plus wheelchair seated passenger. MOT March 1999, 50k miles, very reliable, vgc. £2,850 ono. Tel: (01923) 440939 (Watford).

For personal ads, submit about 25 words and send a cheque or postal order for £5 payable to *Disability Now* with your ad. This is to help cover our costs.

To reply to a personal ad indicate the Box Number and mark the envelope Private and Confidential. If you do not it will be opened. Send to DN, address on page 2.

PEUGEOT EXPERT COMBI turbo diesel. April '98, 2,100 miles, tax March '99, blue. Five seater, Bruno hoist. £12,750 ono. Tel: (01727) 860673.

DAIHATSU HIJET MOBILITY. September '97, 6k miles only, ramps and electric winch for wheelchair. Seats 5 plus wheelchair. £8,500 ono. Tel: 0115-973 4768.

VW CARAVELLE GL7. 2.5 litre, auto. Interbilty wheelchair lift. 1996, N reg, 15k miles, pas, sunroof, light blue, swivel seats. £15,750. Tel: (01438) 811098.

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FORD ESCORT 1.4L, H reg, 14k miles, auto. Lightest power steering, hand controls, Servo brakes, electric handbrake and windows. Comes with electric wheelchair with specially adapted foot-plates that lifts legs into car. £5,950. Tel: (01932) 229636.

RENAULT EXTRA 1.2. M reg, 42k miles. Gowrings conversion, 12 months MOT, vgc. £5,250. Tel: 0117-960 2690 (Bristol).

EZ ACCESS ALUMINIUM rol-up ramp. One metre, suitable for manual/electric wheelchairs. £200. Tel: (01494) 763098.

ORTHO-KINETICS PONY II child's battery powered trike. Bargain £350. Tel: (01373) 865329 (Wilts).

FIAT FIORINO CONVERSION. 1700cc, diesel, M reg, 7k miles, navy blue. Full harness, rear folding ramp, electric winch. Seats 3 plus wheelchair. £7,300 ono. Tel: (01548) 856501 (south Devon).

PICADOR FULL SIZE tricycle with large basket. In very good condition. Cost £900, will accept £200. Tel: (01978) 362581.

VW CAMPER VAN. 1995, 19k miles. Converted to day van for wheelchair passenger with side lift, clamp track and seat belt anchorage. Complete with cooker rings, fridge, sink, gas bottle, crockery (all as new and unused). £18,000. Tel: (01425) 610915 (Hampshire coast).

AQUASOOTHE EASYBATHER, unused, unwanted, half price. £400. Tel: (01202) 716798.

BMW 316, 1986. Red, auto, immaculate condition, fsh. Cowal controls, lightened steering/brakes. C5/6 owner from new. Leather seats, electrics throughout, wheelchair hoist. MOT May '99. Company car forces sale. £3,200 ono. Tel: (01440) 714053 (evenings).

SUNGIFT 300 3-WHEEL mobility scooter. Two and half year old, fsh. Well maintained, very good condition. Charger, basket, folding hood included. £1,650. Contact J Barber, tel: (01784) 452234.

TRANSIT 80, AUTO. F reg, MOT August '99. Remote lift/door, power steering, hand controls, wheelchair clamps. £3,950 ono. Tel: 0181-337 9858.

BATRICAR 4-WHEEL SCOOTER. All-weather canopy, battery charger included. Recently serviced. £300 ono. Tel: (01273) 507423.

Continues on page 35

Comfort and support at the touch of a button

THE MULTI 6 CHAIR FROM A.J. WAY

Safe and smooth in operation, the Multi 6 electric riser/recliner chair features an independently elevating footrest, drop arms for easy side transfer and adjustable neck pillow.

To discuss your individual needs and requirements or to receive a full colour brochure on the Multi 6 Chair including details of your local specialist distributor telephone 01494 471821 - alternatively complete, detach and post the coupon below.

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DN10/98 POST TODAY

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"Sandpipers" overlooks Southport's Marine lake/beaches. Trips to the Lake District, Blackpool, Alton Towers. Accessible holiday centre. 12 single rooms. 12 twin rooms. Help buttons. Indoor swimming pool. CTV. Bar. From £250 pw – food, full care/volunteer help included. Registered with Social Services. Most physical disabilities catered for. Brochure? Call: 0171-833 4579 ext 132.

ORANGE BLOSSOM COAST SPAIN

Now booking for '99. Two sunny 4th floor 'penthouse' apartments in private beachfront complex. Pool, unspoilt resort. Two bedrooms each. Fully equipped, roll-in showers. Huge terrace with sea views. For brochure, tel: (01452) 740820.

Purpose-built Centre

NETLEY VILLAGE – Hampshire
Overlooking Southampton Water, Netley Waterside House has a holiday atmosphere. 16 single and 5 twin rooms. Hoists. Call buttons. Parker bath. Variable height beds. CTV. Lounge. Bar. Trips and food included. Registered with Hants SS. Nurses and volunteers carers. From £235 pw. Tel: 0171 833 4579 ext 132.

THE YORKSHIRE FREEDOM COACH

49-seater, fully belted coach with hydraulic side lift, for private hire. Excursions – Holidays – Trips etc. Keen prices, helpful driver.

FOR AN INSTANT QUOTE
PHONE DERICK ON
(07970) 368537

Have Fun, Fun, Fun!

"Skylarks" – Nottingham

Purpose-built holiday centre recently reopened in August after £1.6m refurbishment. 26 single en-suite, 5 twin rooms. Electric hoists. CTV. Hydro pool. Bar. Help buttons. Free trips/excursions. Nurses/volunteer support. Prices from £245 pw – including food/care. For brochure, please tel: 0171 833 4579 ext 132.

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"1993 HOLIDAY CARE AWARD WINNERS"
Quality self-catering cottages for ALL the family with an emphasis on facilities for disabled visitors. 6 of the 9 traditional Welsh stone cottages are single storey, easily accessible from the car park. WTB Top Grading 5 Dragons. Luxurious indoor heated swimming pool with hoist. Games room. Open ALL YEAR. Groups welcome. For colour brochure telephone

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JUBILEE LODGE – Essex

Purpose built holiday centre. Epping Forest, Cambridge. Southend nearby. 26 single en-suite rooms, 5 twin rooms. CTV. Motorized hoists. Bar. Conservatory. Coffee lounge. Visits/entertainment included. Help buttons. Nurses/volunteer support. Social Services registered. From £235 pw. For brochure call: 0171 833 4579 ext. 132

PENROSE BURDEN NORTH CORNWALL "Holiday Care Award Winners"

Holiday Cottages designed for wheelchair users and their families. Rural setting with superb views. Dogs welcome. Wood burning stoves and daily meal service.

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St Breward, Bodmin, Cornwall
PL30 4LZ. Telephone Bodmin
(01208) 850277 or 850617

Country House Holidays – SURREY

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Recruitment (also on pages 37 & 38)



Helpline Officer (Welfare Rights)

Starting salary
£18,500
(London-based)

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The national charity for everyone affected by MS - working for better care and the eradication of MS.

We are looking for a skilled Helpline Officer to take responsibility for Welfare Benefits and entitlements information and support on the MS Society national Helpline. This will include responding to all relevant e-mails and general correspondence.

The Officer will also play a key role in enabling volunteers, staff and health professionals to understand changes in current legislation that may have an impact on people with MS, their families, friends and carers. This will include drafting and development of accompanying welfare leaflets and briefing manuals.

Aware of the importance of Helplines in increasing access to information and support, applicants should also be experienced in the person centred counselling approach to problem solving. In addition they should have extensive knowledge of social security benefits from 2 years work with a variety of client groups in relevant areas such as disabled rights, housing advocacy or citizens advice. This is open to job sharing.

For further information please write to: Jim Glennon, Helpline Manager, MS Society, 25, Effie Road, Fulham, London, SW6 1EE quoting HPO/WB.

Closing date for applications is 9th October 1998.
Proposed interview date is 16th October 1998.

The MS Society is working to become an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from people with disabilities

Registered Charity 207495

BBC Production

Production Training Scheme

Disability Programmes Unit

Documentaries & History

Two year contract. Training salary £15,730 per annum. London.

Are you a disabled person who has always wanted to work in the broadcasting industry but never thought you'd get the chance? Can you demonstrate a well developed interest in making programmes and a determination to succeed in this exciting and rapidly changing industry?

If you think the answer to both of these questions is yes, then you could be joining our Production Training Scheme on a two year contract starting either later this year or in the Summer of 1999.

This unique opportunity brings with it the chance to work on the innovative and high quality output from the Disability Programmes Unit. It also offers challenging training placements in some of the major factual programme making areas of BBC Production.

As well as being able to demonstrate your strong desire to be involved in factual programme making you will need to have life experience gained as a disabled person and some knowledge of the current issues which affect the lives of Britain's disabled community. You'll also need to show an appreciation of the full range of the BBC's factual output (both radio and TV) and of the programmes made by the DPU.

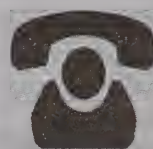
For further details and an application form, please contact BBC Recruitment Services (quoting ref. 29373/DI) by October 13th on 0181-740 0005, Minicom 0181-225 9878. Alternatively, send a postcard to BBC Recruitment Services, PO Box 10670, London W12 8GN, or e-mail recserv@bbc.co.uk quoting ref. 29373/DI and giving your full name and address. Application forms to be returned by October 16th.

If you prefer to work in formats other than standard print you may request this material in the format of your choice by telephoning Liam Proudlock Access Manager DPU on 0181-752 5378 (Voice and Minicom).

You can also see this vacancy on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/jobs/e29373.shtml>



Working for equality of opportunity



(WEST LANCS)

DISABILITY HELPLINE

are seeking to recruit a

Manager

for their new

Disability Information & Advice Centre based in Skelmersdale.

Salary: SO1 £18,006 to £19,194

The manager will be a highly motivated person responsible for the well established Disability Helpline Information and Advice Service run by disabled volunteers and the establishment of a new Disability Information and Advice Centre.

You will have a sound knowledge of issues affecting disabled people and experience of working in the voluntary sector, project management, training, volunteer recruitment and supervision.

We would welcome applications from disabled people, and will interview all disabled people who meet the essential criteria.

For further details and an application form please telephone Alice Evans on (01695) 51819. Closing date: 26 October, 10am.

Registered Charity no. 510860

WEST OF ENGLAND COALITION OF DISABLED PEOPLE

requires a disabled person for the post of

NORTH SOMERSET DEVELOPMENT WORKER

Apt & C pt 30 – £18,609

35 hours per week
30 days annual leave
pension scheme

This full-time post could be negotiated to part-time, if necessary, for the successful applicant.

WECODP is a well established campaigning and community development organisation in a thriving disabled people's movement and voluntary sector.

The post is an exciting opportunity to explore and develop alternatives to traditional services from a disability equality perspective in the North Somerset area and to support the empowerment of local disabled people.

We are committed towards equal opportunities and we particularly welcome applications from disabled people who experience simultaneous oppression.

For an application pack phone Berni on 0117-942 0721 (voice & minicom) at The Yard, 6 Sommerville Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 9AA.

Closing date for applications: Friday 30 October 1998

Interviews will be held in the week beginning: 9 November 1998.

Working together for our right to equality

THE STACKPOLE CENTRE

UNIQUE HOLIDAY COMPLEX ON THE SOUTH PEMBROKESHIRE COAST FOR FAMILIES, GROUPS & INDIVIDUALS: SELF-CATERING, COTTAGES, GROUP HOUSES & HOTEL (Wales Tourist Board 3 Crowns Highly Commended) POOL, JACUZZI, THEATRE, RESTAURANT, ART, POTTERY & MUSIC ROOMS, OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE LEVEL 1
For info & Holiday Pack, Tel: 01646 661425
Fax: 01646 661456

Blagdon Farm Country Holidays Devon/Cornwall border

Superb, south-facing, wheelchair accessible luxury bungalows overlooking lake and set within 38 acres of glorious countryside. Many on-site facilities including tea room/shop. Take-away meals and equipment hire available. Tourist Board Highly Commended.
For colour brochure please contact:
Pauline and Tony Blight, Blagdon Farm, Ashwater, Beaworthy, Devon EX21 5DF.
Phone: 01409 211509. Fax 01409 211510.

Brittany Cottage to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details **C. Hodgson.**
Tel (01924) 454300.

ODDICOMBE HALL HOTEL

Provides an excellent holiday for the disabled person and their family. We have full disabled facilities and are able to cater for organised parties. All wheelchair accessible rooms open on to a private garden with conservatory and have breathtaking sea views. Private car park with unloading at entrance to the hotel. Open all year.
Why not escape and relax at delightful Babbacombe, Torquay? Category 2.
Special 3-4 day breaks Nov-April. Discount for group bookings. Tel: (01803) 313457.

LLETY MIERI LLANDEILO, WEST WALES

3 charming award-winning cottages, designed for wheelchair users and their families. Peaceful rural location overlooked by Dinewr Castle. Each warm and well equipped cottage sleeps 4. Extensive grounds and games room. Open all year. Short breaks available. Tel: Catherine McLoughlin (01558 823 059) for brochure.

ASHWELLTHORPE HALL HOTEL IN SUNNY NORFOLK! 4-Day Mid-Week Bargain Break JUST £99.00

Beautiful Elizabethan Manor House in 11 acres of natural grounds. Wheelchair accessible throughout, some rooms with electric hoist etc. Non-institutionalised, friendly hotel atmosphere. Minibus available. Explore the many attractions of Norfolk. Half-board bargain break (Monday to Friday: Oct', Nov', Dec' '98).
CALL NOW (01508) 489324

Recruitment (also on pages 36 & 38)

West Lancashire Association of Disabled People



Registered Charity No. 514910

are seeking to recruit a

Disability Network Development Officer

based in Skelmersdale, Lancashire.
Salary: 6/SO1 £16,233 to £18,006.

The Development Officer will be a highly motivated person responsible for developing a network of local disabled people providing mutual support.

You will have sound knowledge of issues affecting disabled people and experiences of working in the voluntary sector, project management and training.

We would welcome applications from disabled people, and will interview all disabled people who meet the essential criteria.

For further information and an application pack please write to: WLAD, 79 Westgate, Sandy Lane Centre, Skelmersdale, Lancashire WN8 8LA. Closing date: 13 November 1998, 12 noon.



Social Services Department SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT DEVELOPMENT WORKER PHYSICAL AND SENSORY DISABILITIES 2 Year Fixed Term Contract

Salary £16,233 to £17,319 per annum 36 hours per week

We are looking for an enthusiastic and motivated person to facilitate the involvement of disabled service users in the planning, monitoring and development of Social Welfare and Health Services in Tameside. The post will place particular emphasis on the Deaf Community.

A C.A.C.D.P. Stage Two sign language qualification, or BSL as a first language, is therefore an essential requirement.

Applicants should also have at least two years' experience of working with disabled people, preferably Deaf people, and experience of working in a developmental role in a community context.

Support will be offered to enable a Deaf person to work effectively in the post.

The post is jointly funded by Health and Social Services and is a fixed term contract for two years.

Some evening and weekend working will be required.

For an informal discussion please contact Suzanne Robinson, Tel 0161 342 3574, Minicom 0161 342 2577, or Sandy Parkinson, Tel./Minicom 0161 370 1179.

Please Quote Reference No. SS1601.

Closing date: 31st October 1998.

Signed information is available on video, on request.

Signed applications on video are welcome.

Application forms are available from Social Services Department, Personnel Section, Council Offices, Wellington Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside OL6 6DL. Telephone 0161 342 3351. (24 hour answering service and minicom available).

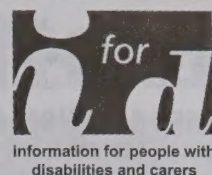


Tameside is an equal opportunity employer

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINER

Berkshire Disability Information Network (bdin) is a voluntary sector organisation, run by disabled people and carers, providing a quality information service to anyone associated with disability. Following a successful application to the National Lottery Charities Board, we seek to appoint a Disability Awareness Trainer.



Working from our office in Bracknell, the trainer will deliver bespoke training packages to commercial and non-commercial organisations. The successful candidate will also need to develop and maintain an existing marketing strategy which is resulting in firm orders.

Candidates will be disabled people familiar with the Social Model of Disability, have a thorough knowledge of the Disability Discrimination Act and will have proven experience of both training and standard office based IT, preferably supported by appropriate qualifications. Interviewed candidates will be required to demonstrate these skills. A driving licence, marketing skills and an understanding of the voluntary sector would be desirable but not essential.

The appointed person will attract an annual salary of £16,000.

Please apply in your preferred medium enclosing your cv to: Mark Shrimpton, Manager, bdin, Brakenhale School, Rectory Lane, Bracknell RG12 7BA. If you wish to have a chat about the post, please call Mark Shrimpton on (01344) 301572, minicom (01344) 427757.

Closing date: 9.10.98. Interview date: 15.10.98.

This post is funded by the National Lottery Charities Board. bdin is a registered charity, no 1039336.



DISABLED PERSONS TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DPTAC)

DPTAC is the Statutory Advisory Body to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions on all matters relating to transport and disability.

Appointments to the Committee are currently being reviewed and we are looking for applications for the post of Chairman and for people to join the Committee as members for the next three years.

DETR is committed to the principles of public appointments based on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process. Candidates must have a strong background in transport and disability issues. Applications from disabled people, women and people from ethnic minority communities would be particularly welcomed.

For further information and an application form please contact the Mobility Unit, DETR, Zone 1/11, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR.

Telephone: 0171-890 4916, Fax: 0171-890 6102, E-mail: mu.detr@gtnet.gov.uk

Completed application forms should be returned by 31 October.

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ELECTRIC RECLINER CHAIRS

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TELEPHONE: (0191) 226 0099 FAX: (0191) 272 1313

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August 1994, Renault Traffic, 1721cc, manual, in white, 1 owner, 44k miles, fsh, MOT September 1999, complete with ramp, clamps etc. £5,000 ono.

August 1995, Fiat Fiorino, 1300cc, manual, in white, 1 owner, 23k miles, MOT September 1999, complete with ramp, clamps etc. £5,500 ono.

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Contact Paul or David,
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Tel: (01704) 506608.

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Effective clothes protection - fully washable
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CoTrim specialises in wheelchair accessible conversions
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ARE YOU HAVING PROBLEMS
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Register your requirements or vehicle
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For full details of this service telephone
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Disability Now is not responsible for
claims made in the advertisements it
prints and all readers are advised to
check claims with the advertisers
before relying on them.



DEVELOPMENT WORKER (Start Up Project) Salary: NJC Scale SO1 (£18,006 to £19,194)

DIAL UK is the national organisation for a network of advice centres run by and for disabled people. We are seeking a Development Worker to work with groups of disabled people to set up new disability information and advice services to meet DIAL standards. The post is part of a three year Department of Health funded 'Start Up Project'.

Applications are invited from candidates who have voluntary and/or advice sector experience. Development Workers will be required to travel and there is some scope for working from home although a minimum of three days a week will be spent in our Doncaster-based office. Job share applicants will be considered if a suitable job-share partner can be found.

This post was advertised previously but was open to disabled people only. We now invite applications from any suitably qualified person, though still encouraging applications from people with disabilities. For an application pack please contact the Chief Executive, DIAL UK, Park Lodge, St Catherine's Hospital, Tickhill Road, Doncaster DN4 8QN. Tel: (01302) 310123 (voice & text), Fax: (01302) 310404.

Closing date: 9 November

Interviews: mid-November

Shape Arts Officer in Wandsworth

£18,573 - £21,534 pro rata

Shape needs a P/T (3 days a week) Arts Officer based at BAC co-ordinating arts projects with disabled and older people in LB Wandsworth. The ideal candidate will have previous experience of working in the arts and a thorough knowledge of disability rights.

Details: Shape London Recruitment, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA.

Closing date: Friday 30 October.

Shape London is a registered charity and equal opportunities employer.

hapa

promoting inclusive play and leisure

INFORMATION AND PUBLICATIONS CO-ORDINATOR

Salary £16,000 for 30 hours a week (2 year fixed term contract).

Experienced professional required for busy team working on promotional issues for disabled children in play and leisure.

Experience, skills and knowledge required:

- Research, writing and editing
- Publicity, marketing and wide internal/external liaison
- Service development including Access database and possibly the internet
- Excellent time management and prioritisation skills
- Knowledge of play, good practice issues highly desirable

Commitment to HAPA philosophy of inclusion expected. Applications are particularly invited from disabled people.

For further details and application pack write to: HAPA Ltd, NTIS, Pryor's Bank, Bishop's Park, London SW6 3LA enclosing A4 sae (38p). Closing date for applications 21 October. Reg. Charity No. 284935.

LAMBETH CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING



The Lambeth Centre for independent living (Lambeth CIL), an organisation where disabled people plan and develop activities and services with local disabled people, have the following vacancies:

1. INDEPENDENT LIVING CO-ORDINATOR (35 hours)

Salary - £19,474 pa (incl of LW)

This post-holder will provide advice and support to empower disabled people towards Independent Living. Good knowledge of welfare benefits and housing issues essential.

2. CENTRE DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR (21 hours)

Salary - £11,138 pa (incl of LW)

This post-holder will plan and develop a range of activities and services at the Centre with local disabled people. Experience of centre Management/Development work desirable.

3. FINANCE SUPPORT WORKER (14 hours)

Salary - £6,552 pa (incl of LW)

This post-holder will develop and maintain existing financial systems. Book-keeping experience essential.

Lambeth CIL has an equal opportunities commitment to respond to the needs of disabled people from all sections of the community. Applications are particularly encouraged from under-represented groups (eg disabled people from black and ethnic minority communities, disabled lesbians and gay men).

Barstow Crescent • Palace Road • London SW2 3NS

Tel: 0181-671 8892 • Minicom: 0181 671 9179 • Fax: 0181 671 9078

For an application pack on any of the above vacancies contact Lambeth CIL's office above. Please note: CVs shall not be accepted.

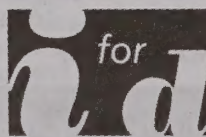
Application packs can be made available in large print, tape, or floppy disk (PC format).

Working premises are fully accessible to wheelchair users.

Closing date for completed applications: Friday 30 October 1998.

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER

Berkshire Disability Information Network (bdin) is an independent, user-led registered charity providing a quality information service for anyone associated with disability.



information for people with disabilities and carers

As a result of a successful bid to the European Social Fund GB, bdin seeks to recruit a Financial Controller to manage our increasingly complex streams of income. Candidates will be suitably qualified disabled people who can demonstrate a track record of quality financial management. Those who can show an affinity with the voluntary sector and an understanding of grant aid, allied to disparate monitoring requirements, will have a distinct advantage.

Salary £22,000-£25,000 depending on experience and qualifications.

If you wish to apply for this post, please write, enclosing your cv to: Mark Shrimpton, Manager, bdin, Brakenhale School, Rectory Lane, Bracknell RG12 7BA. Applications in other media are acceptable. If you wish to have a chat about the post, please call Mark Shrimpton on (01344) 301572, minicom (01344) 427757.

Closing date: 9.10.98. Interview date: 14.10.98.

bdin is a registered charity, no 1039336.



EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND GB

DN is on the web. Visit our site at <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk> or you can e-mail us with ideas on editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

Disability Now is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertisers before relying on them.



LONDON'S INFORMATION & ADVICE SERVICE FOR
DISABLED PEOPLE ON ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
54 Chilton Street London NW1 1HS

Youth Project Co-ordinator

(3 year contract)

required for our exciting, new project working with disabled people between the ages of 14 and 25; to motivate and empower them so they can enjoy arts facilities in London.

Experience of working with young disabled people is essential.
Salary: £16,378 pa.

Contact: Pauline Guthrie, Development Officer, at the above address. Please enclose an A4 stamped addressed envelope.

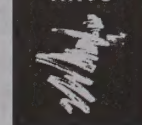
Closing date for applications: 23 October 1998.

WEST MIDLANDS DISABILITY ARTS FORUM

advancing Disability culture in the West Midlands

SUPPORTED BY

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REGIONAL DISABILITY ARTS CO-ORDINATOR

*£18,180 per annum 37 hours per week -
2 year contract in the first instance*

The newly formed West Midlands Disability Arts Forum is seeking to appoint a dynamic and committed Disabled person to this new and exciting role.

The postholder requires an in-depth understanding of Disability politics and Disability Arts and will be responsible for leading and developing the profile of Disability Arts in the West Midlands together with the WMDAF management committee. You will have experience of the above together with fundraising, organisational and communication skills.

If you are interested in applying for this post please write, enclosing a first class (26p) stamp to: the Regional Co-ordinator for WMDAF, c/o Karen Kirkman, West Midlands Arts, 82 Granville Street, Birmingham B1 2LH. Applications are available on tape and large print. Please note CVs will not be accepted.

The closing date for applications to be received is 20 October 1998. Interviews will be held on Friday 6 November 1998.

WMDAF is supported by the National Lottery Charities Board and West Midlands Arts is striving to be an anti-oppressive organisation.



Care & Repair (West Leicestershire) Ltd

Disabled Persons' Housing Service

Care and Repair is a successful, independent Home Improvement Agency. An NLCB grant brings the exciting opportunity to develop a DPHS - a one-stop housing advice shop which will enable disabled people to overcome their housing related problems. We have appointed the Housing Adviser/OT and now wish to recruit:

Technical Adviser

£16,233 (NJC 26). Part-time (17.5 hours) pro rata £8,116.

To provide practical technical advice and assistance. Suitable qualification preferred but extensive relevant experience (5 years) in house construction, renovation and designing adaptations is essential.

Project Assistant

£13,008 (NJC 19). Part-time (17.5 hours) pro rata £6,504.

Multi-skilled person to develop database/register of disabled persons housing needs, information library and to provide administrative and casework support. Minimum of 2 years relevant experience, including IT, also excellent communication & administration skills.

Closing date: Thursday 15 October '98.

Funding initially for up to three years.

For further information and application details (no CVs) contact Care and Repair, 2 Mantle Lane, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 3DW or telephone (01530) 510031 (24 hours), fax: (01530) 833031.



Care & Repair (West Leics) Ltd
is committed to being an
equal opportunities employer.



**Deadlines for the August issue of
Disability Now:
Booking deadline is 11 July
Copy deadline is 15 July**

Dive into a bestseller



Dubbed "one of the great books of the century" by the *Financial Times*, *The Diving Bell & The Butterfly** is the best-selling memoir of Jean-Dominique Bauby, editor-in-chief of *Elle* magazine in Paris. Bauby suffered a stroke which left him paralysed and speechless. This incredible book was "dictated" using movements of his eyelid and describes how he feels as if he is trapped inside a diving bell, but is sustained by the butterflies of his imaginative spirit. Thanks to publishers Fourth Estate, we have 10 copies of this best-seller (worth £5.99) to give away.

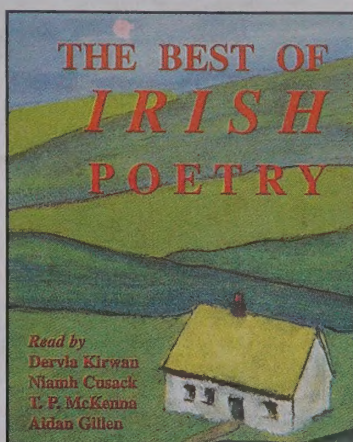
*ISBN 1-85702-794-9

Christmas is coming

Scarily, it's not long until we stuff ourselves with turkey, turkey and more turkey. Yes, Christmas is near, and wheelchair charity, Motivation, is offering *DN* readers standard packs of its colourful Christmas cards for £1.80 (normally £2 per pack of 10; see end of text). Designed by Katy Etherington, a wheelchair user, the cards will help raise funds for the production and distribution of wheelchairs in developing countries. Also, the first 10 readers to write to: *DN* Christmas Card Free Draw, Motivation, Brockley Academy, Brockley Lane, Backwell, Bristol BS48 4AQ, will receive a free pack of cards.



• Contact Motivation quoting *DN* for cheaper packs of cards, tel: (01275) 464012.



Irish have it taped

Fed up with *Riverdance* and *U2*? Then settle back in your favourite chair and listen to a bit of Irish culture. The Audio Book and Music Company have kindly given *DN* 12 copies of their *Best of Irish Poetry* cassettes to give away. Spanning over 300 years of Irish verse, it features poetry by WB Yeats and Seamus Heaney read by leading Irish actors including Dervla Kirwan (*Ballykissangel*). If you are not a lucky winner, you can find *The Best of Irish Poetry* at good book and record stores as a cassette (£8.99) or CD (£9.99).

• The Audio Book & Music Company, tel: 0181-830 7224.

Win quality time in Norwich



If this month's city focus has whetted your appetite, why not visit the medieval city of Norwich yourself? Enter this special offer and you could be the lucky winner of a two night break worth £250.

The Quality Friendly Hotel, situated close to the city centre, is offering one lucky *DN* reader a two night break for two people, including bed, breakfast and evening meal. Each room in this luxurious hotel features auto-dial telephones, satellite tv, and fitted en-suite bathrooms and showers. There is also a leisure centre with heated indoor pool, whirlpool, sauna and gymnasium. The hotel has

disabled access to its restaurant, bars and leisure club, and two bedrooms have wheelchair access, including grips in the bathroom (although there are no bath lifts), making them suitable for disabled guests who have assistance. The hotel offers the best in East Anglian cookery including carvery, à la carte and children's menus. Awarded four crowns by the English Tourist Board, it provides the perfect environment after a hard day's sightseeing.

• The Quality Friendly Hotel, 2 Barnard Road, Bowthorpe, Norwich NR5 9JB, tel: (01603) 741161.

To enter these offers, send your name and address on a postcard marked Norwich, Butterfly, Irish or to: *DN*, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW. Closing date 30 October 1998. Offers not open to *DN* staff or associates. UK entrants only. Cash equivalents not available on any prize.

What's in *DN* next month?



- **FASHION**
Keep stylish and dry in the miserable autumn weather.
 - **MICROTECH**
The best of what was new at ISAAC and Communication Matters.
 - **MY FAVOURITE WALK**
A stroll along Haroldston Chins on the Pembrokeshire Coast National Trail, which is now accessible to wheelchairs.
 - **AIDS AND EQUIPMENT**
DN checks out standing and support equipment.
- Plus the best news, views, jobs and offers. On sale 24 October.

NEWSAGENT ORDER FORM

(Please complete and take to your newsagent)

Please reserve me a regular copy of *Disability Now* until further notice ☐
Please deliver a copy of *Disability Now* to my home address ☐

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Signature: _____

To the newsagent: *Disability Now*, ISSN 0958-4676, is published monthly by Scope, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW. It is distributed by MMC Ltd, Octagon House, White Hart Meadows, Ripley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6HR.
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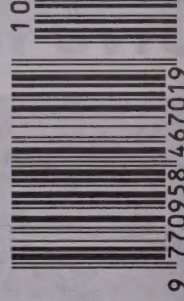
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Regulars

Job seeker Have faith in charity	16
Keep fit The gym'll fix it	20
Access Half-term discoveries	22
Hobbies Gone fishing	29
City focus Norwich - it's not flat	30

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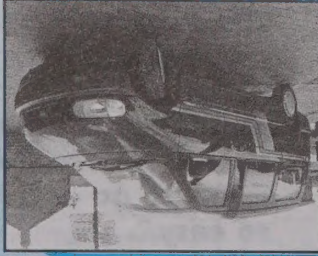
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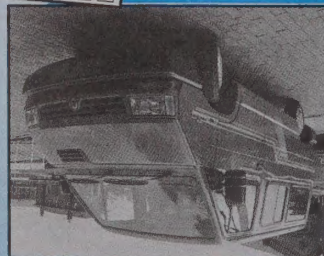
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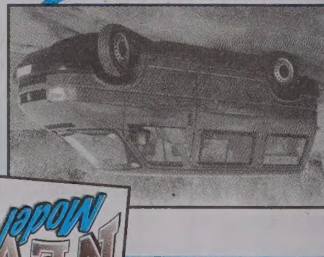
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